The Bookman

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

"Soliloquies in England," a new volume by George Santayana, will be published this spring by Messrs. Constable.

In the course of an interview in the *Boston Transcript* Mr. Thornton Butterworth has some interesting things to say about books and publishing. He confesses to a firm belief in the topical book, and thinks that courage and caution count in publishing for even more than foresight, since one has always to allow for the fickleness of the public taste and the facts that, so far as a book's fortunes are concerned, "events have their influence, and a national calamity or a world's sensation may interfere with the success of the best-planned book that is going." He believes that most publishers, like himself, keep an open door for new authors, and are quick to recognise merit and give it its chance with the public. He thinks the secret of success in publishing is the "quiet, steady enthusiasm" which comes of a belief in the book published, and though he owns "there is such a thing as luck," he is satisfied that an author's success is more often attributable to "good sound work, with good sound workmanship behind it." On the debatable question of whether serial publication injures the sale of a book, Mr. Thornton Butterworth answers emphatically that it does not. He has in fact found it to have a distinctly opposite effect. The Memoirs of Baron von Eckardstein, which he recently published, appeared serially in a popular Sunday paper, yet, he says, the whole edition of the book was sold out two days before publication, and "it was the same with Mrs. Asquith's Autobiography; with Edward Bok's; with General Townshend's 'My Campaign in Mesopotamia'; with John Russell's 'Where the Pavement Ends,' and others I could mention."

"Princess Mary," by M. C. Carey (3s. 6d.; Nisbet), an admirably written biography of our popular young Princess, has the double merit of being as

Mr. Alec Waugh.

interesting as it is timely. The book is attractively produced and well illustrated with photographs.

It is five years since Mr. Alec Waugh fluttered a good many dovecotes with "The Loom of Youth," one of the most successful of first novels by one of the very youngest of first novelists. We have had two books of his war-time experiences in the interval, and at length he has completed a second novel, "The Lonely Unicorn," which Mr. Grant Richards will publish next month. The title gives nothing away, and the most we can gather is that it is very much of a love story but not a psychological novel as, although the characters think as much as is good for them, they are doing something most of the time. There is even some cricket in it, but we know nothing of the unicorn beyond the admitted fact that he is lonely.

Mr. Lloyd Williams, whose new novel, "The Only Girl in the World," has just been published by Messrs. Page & Co., is a precocious author who began to write stories as soon as he could read them, but before he thought of printing any and settling down to a literary career, he coquetted with several other callings. He was by turns office boy, commercial traveller, actor, schoolmaster, public entertainer, journalist; then he wrote a long story which ran successfully as a serial, and in a short time he had won the place he still holds in the front rank of newspaper serialists. It is some time since he published a book, and his many readers will hope he will not let so long an interval pass before he follows this with another.

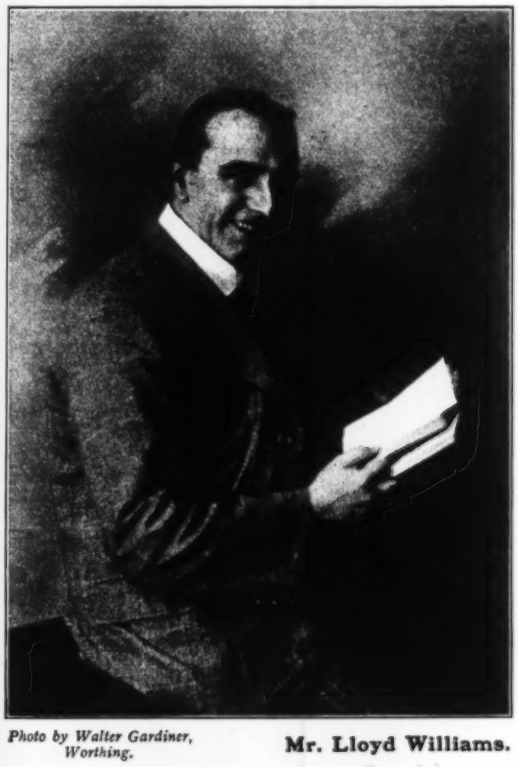


Photo by Walter Gardiner, Worthing.

Mr. Lloyd Williams.

Mr. William Charles Braithwaite.

It is less than a month since the literary world received with interest the news that William Charles Braithwaite, the Quaker historian and banker, had received the honorary theological degree of Doctor from Marburg University, for his contributions to Church History, and especially for his important books, "The Beginnings of Quakerism" and "The Second Period of Quakerism," no less than in recognition of his efforts on behalf of education and international friendship. His sudden death last month after his return from attending an educational conference in London, has deprived the Society of Friends of one of its most valued members, and the world of letters of a ripe scholar and a very able historical writer. Dr. Braithwaite, who came of a seventeenth century Westmorland Quaker family, lived at Banbury. He was Chairman of the National Adult School Union, and served as Treasurer of the Friends' Ambulance Unit during the war.

A curiously interesting book, and one which will be of special value to print collectors, is "The Headless Horseman," by G. S. Layard, which Messrs. Philip Allan are about to publish. It tells the strange story of the most widely discussed copper-plate engraving in the world—that by Pierre Lombart that survives in various phases: headless, and, in different states, wearing the heads of Charles I, Cromwell, and another. It has taken Mr. Layard twenty years to track down all his facts and unravel the mystery of this protean print, and the story he has to tell of it makes a romance that will appeal even to those who know

little of the fascinations of collecting. The book will be issued in a limited edition of 250 copies, with 25 on hand-made paper, each signed and numbered by the author. It has an introduction by Mr. Campbell Dodgson, C.B.E.

The February issue of *The Bookseller and The Stationery Trades' Journal* prints interesting lists of best-selling books in London and in eight great cathedral cities of England and Wales. Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson's "If Winter Comes" heads each list. In similar records of best sellers in America, in the last month's American *Bookman*, "If Winter Comes" is the only book that appears in all of them, and in most cases it heads the list. No novel has had so great and immediate a success on both sides of the Atlantic for many years past. Mr. Hutchinson's new novel, "This Freedom," will be published by Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton in the autumn.

Mr. A. S. M. Hutchinson.
From a drawing by D. Burroughe.

In 1859, Millais, Leighton, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt and William Morris were among the early recruits to the Artists' Rifles; famous names have never been lacking from its muster roll; and in 1914 the number of our younger authors, artists, journalists and publishers who enlisted in that distinguished corps broke all records. 15,002 "Artists" served in the war, and "The Roll of Honour of the Artists' Rifles," compiled by Major S. Stagoll Higham, V.D. (20s. net; Howlett & Son), gives all essential particulars in the service of every one of these. 10,256 were gazetted to commissions, 1,852 won honours, and there were 6,071 casualties. The book has been compiled, illustrated, printed, bound and published by past and present members of the Regiment, the illustrators including W. C. Horsley, W. Lee-Hankey, H. M. Paget, W. B. Wollen, E. Handley-Reed, J. M. Watt and John Nash.

A further volume which Messrs. Appleton are adding to their series of musical works is "The Singer and his Art," by Thaddeus Wronski.

Mr. Daniel O'Connor has taken over *The Review of Reviews*, which will henceforth be edited by himself. He intends to make it again what it was under W. T. Stead—literally a review of the world's reviews. We heartily wish him success in his enterprise.

H. G. Wells's new novel, "The Secret Places of the Heart," will be published shortly by Messrs. Cassell, who are also publishing "The Altar Steps," by Compton Mackenzie, and "The Confessions of a Well-Meaning Woman," a new satirical novel of modern society by Stephen McKenna.

A new novel by Allan Monkhouse, a realistic domestic drama entitled "Helen," will be published almost immediately by Mr. Jonathan Cape.

During the whole of this month there will be on view at the Brook Street Art Gallery an exhibition of sketches in the East and other work by Stella Langdale, and of oil paintings, sketches and drawings by E. Hesketh Hubbard, well known as a painter and etcher of caravan and circus life, founder of The Print Society and editor of "On Making and Collecting Etchings." Miss Langdale is the illustrator of Stephen Phillips's "Christ in

Hades," Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven," and other books.

The death last month of Mr. Edward Wright passed almost unnoticed by the Press, yet he was an abler, more accomplished man of letters than are many who have achieved more notoriety. Always an insatiable reader, with a wide knowledge of French and Italian as well as of English literature, he did not begin to realise that he had literary gifts of his own till he was nearly thirty, when an illness and deterioration of his voice ended all prospect of his career as a vocalist, and he turned to writing. The first thing he wrote, a long article on "The Golden Age of English Prose," was accepted and published by the *Quarterly*, and in the course of a year or so he contributed other articles on such subjects as "The Novel of Misery," "Literature of the Outlands," to the same magazine. He edited an edition of Andrew Marvell for Messrs. Methuen; did a good deal of miscellaneous work for many papers, and wrote reviews and critical articles and verse for the *Academy*, THE BOOKMAN, etc. He contributed some hundred articles to that most successful of war-time periodicals, *The Great War*, and, to say nothing of other activities, translated stories and wrote some of the introductions to Mr. J. A. Hammerton's twenty-volume "Masterpiece Library of Short Stories." He was a hard worker, and finished in harness, at the age of fifty, for he had spent all his last day in writing a long article for a forthcoming publication, and had scarcely completed it when he fell unconscious and died of heart failure. His literary judgments were sound and his style had clearness and individuality. His latest contribution to THE BOOKMAN, a tercentenary article on Andrew Marvell, is being reprinted in the Marvell Memorial volume, which has been compiled and edited by the Chief Librarian of Hull.

Mr. Edward Wright.
From a drawing by W. Scott Hetherington.

"Cosmic Vision," by T. J. Cobden-Sanderson, which Mr. R. Cobden-Sanderson will publish shortly, is an attempt to define a point of view whence the life of Man may be seen and lived in harmony with the scientific vision of the universe, without the assistance of any of the accepted religions. Incidentally a brief account is given of the foundation and purpose of the Doves Press and Bindery, and of the motive and circumstances which led the writer to exchange the "robe" of the lawyer for the "apron" of the workman.

"Green Room Gossip," by Archibald Haddon, which Mr. Stanley Paul is publishing, discusses with a good deal of freedom all the principal happenings on and concerning the London Stage for the last few years. Mr. Haddon is well known as the dramatic critic of the *Daily Express*.

Messrs. Leonard Parsons announce a £100 First-Novel Prize Competition in which the winner will receive, in addition to the prize-money, a liberal royalty on every copy sold, and retain all film, dramatic and translation rights. The last day for sending in MSS. is the 30th September next. Full particulars can be obtained on application to Messrs. Curtis Brown, Ltd. (who have undertaken all preliminary arrangements), of 6, Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2.

Mr. and Mrs. Ridgwell Cullum and Mr. B. W. Matz (right).
Mr. Ridgwell Cullum's new novel, "The Man in the Twilight" (Cecil Palmer), is proving the most successful of his books. A large first edition was quickly exhausted, and a second edition is now in the press.

NOTES ON NEW BOOKS.

The essayist who can steer clear of worthless brilliance and yet write arrestingly on "ordinary" subjects, deserves all our gratitude. Mr. Bart Kennedy succeeds, in this lively, very thoughtful, and exhilarating book, "Thought-Coin" (5s.; Rider), in proving that the "ordinary" aspect of the world is the wonderful one; and he does it without straining after effect, without turning the English language head-over-heels to make us stare and clap and call him a clever

fellow. He is simply good company, a traveller who has known the roads of thought, the way our minds and bodies work in this strange setting of a "lukewarm bullet," as R. L. Stevenson called our planet, and who passes on the knowledge he has gained, the ideas that have come to him here and there. As one who has been sailor and soldier, miller and miner, singer and actor, and many other things in his career, he has "seen life," and his experiences have not been wasted, as this book proves. Whether fanciful or critical, his mood provides good fare, and we are quite sure that many readers will be found to whom his "thought-coin" will prove inspiriting and of permanent value.

The "Catalogue of a Handel Collection," formed by Newman Flower (Idlehurst, Sevenoaks), will be the first intimation to many who know him only as a novelist and as Messrs. Cassell's editor-in-chief, that Mr. Flower is a Handel enthusiast. He acquired the collection, formerly owned by the Earls of Aylesford, of the series of transcripts of Handel's works made by his amanuensis, John Christopher Smith, and has made large additions to it, which include first editions and early editions of Handel's scores, letters, manuscripts, autographs, portraits of Handel, of singers in his operas, and early copies of works by his contemporaries. A complete list of all the collection is given in the catalogue, which is illustrated with some excellently reproduced portraits and facsimiles of MSS.

"Swannington: Its Church, Rectors, and History," by the Rev. John Dixon Wortley, M.A. (12s. 6d. net; Norwich). Norfolk is for the historian a happy hunting ground. Here, in many of the towns and villages, Time seems to have stood still; the march of progress has left few visible traces; the glamour of the past is with us wheresoever we go. To the Rector of Swannington this history of his village, its church and rectors, must have brought many hours of pleasant research. He has delved back into the centuries, gathering together facts and surmises that result in a most interesting book even to those unacquainted with the locality. Those who know the picturesque valley in which the village is situated, know the village itself with its green and rivulet, its ancient church, its life and associations, will welcome the volume as a valuable addition to the many records of the county.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

VICTOR BRIDGES.

MARCH 14TH, the birthday of Mr. Victor Bridges, was, in a much earlier year, that of Johann Strauss, "the father of the waltz." The coincidence is happy, for to read Mr. Bridges is to start a series of joyous vibrations comparable with the urgings of inspired dance music. He is not didactic; he does not invite his reader across the bourne of incarnate life. He is an entertainer, and though Dame Folly may find him too strenuous, and the Man-About-Town too monogamous, he appeals not only to the honourable and "sensible" reader, but to most Britons not too dominated by the calls of duty or mischievousness to wander into dreamland. The very discreet lawlessness of his imagination may, it is true, provoke a half-admiring sneer from Bohemia and Alsatia, but he never deserves the frowns with which writers who inflate their stories with "messages" so often darken dreamy faces. A love addressing mightily both body and soul across leagues of danger is naturally his theme in a long story, but he excels in depicting "pals," and the earnestness of the lover does not hypnotise the lover's creator.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé **Mr. Victor Bridges.**

Mr. Bridges never loses consciousness of an alliance with frivolity. Grace and humour keep the average temperature of his writing lower than its pace towards its blissful goals might excuse. His writing is, with all its romanticism, in tune with our civilisation. It goes with modern clubs and cuisine, and that elegant restraint which made the adventurous finder inquire at Ujiji of the heroic found, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" Mr. Bridges impresses one more by this felicitous harmony of his art with the characteristic British gentleman of the better type, aristocratically fraternal, wittily urbane, nonchalantly heroic, than by any obvious claim to stylistic originality such as Meredith at one end of a chain of authors and Mr. Bart Kennedy at the other might put in. But freshness is a charming trait, and this quality is enjoyable in all the volumes produced by Mr. Bridges. Freshness is something which makes the crocus just as pleasing this year as last year: the fried herring also successfully endures comparison by the same virtue. In art it is not nearly as usual as it should be. Blessed therefore is Mr. Bridges.

A pause is the rhetorical homage due to a beatitude, and so I temporarily leave criticism and supply a few biographical details: Our author is the son of Captain and Mrs. George Bridges, of Clifton, Bristol. Captain Bridges is a soldier-poet who served throughout the Indian Mutiny. On his mother's side the novelist is a grandson of the Right Hon. Fitzstephen French, for forty years Member for Roscommon, and he is also related to Lord John Russell the prime minister, as Mrs. George Bridges is a great granddaughter of the statesman's uncle, Lord William Russell, who was murdered by his valet. At Newton Abbot and Haileybury, where Victor was educated, he was much more successful at Latin, Greek and history than at mathematics. Ere finding himself as a story-writer he had experiences in banking, the theatre, journalism and editorial work. He was the first secretary of the Boy Scouts, and a little volume, "Camping Out for Boy Scouts and Others," shows that he was able to do a candidly useful thing brightly. "I had written short stories ever since I can remember," he informed me. The first paper to print his work was *The Bristol Times and Mirror*. He feels he owes much to the encouragement and advice of the dramatist, Christopher St. John, who helped him consistently when he first came to London. As regards the style of narration which Mr. Bridges adopts, he pays tribute to the veteran Mr. F. C. Philips, whose "As in a Looking Glass" and "A Jack and Three Jills" struck him as being written "in a delightfully fresh, simple and crisp fashion which," said he to me, "I at once [after reading them] began to try to follow."

Here we return again to criticism. If we fail to see in the novels of Mr. Bridges the reflex of a model, it is because he clothes thought as a West End tailor clothes a gentleman whose dress succeeds by escaping remark. A remarkable style, a "great" style, increases the reader's articulateness; it enlarges his understanding of the art of sound; but it separates the stylist from his contemporaries; it produces an ill-natured feeling that he is "putting on side"—posing with the artificial increase of bulk obscurely referred to in that idiom. Mr. Bridges, delighting in naturalness, has a style which is, by his predilection, doomed to be ordinary in the best sense of the word—that is, easy without slipshodness. His stories address one almost with the directness of "films," and, considering his choice of incidents, his skilful simplicity in narration is just what we like.

Thanks partly to the format which his obliging publishers, Messrs. Mills & Boon, have given to most of his works, one can carry all Mr. Bridges' passports to literary immortality in one's pockets (if one wears an overcoat). There are "The Man from Nowhere" (a success of 1913), "Mr. Lyndon at Liberty," "The Lady from Longacre," "The Cruise of the *Scandal*," and "Greensea Island" (recently published). The first three books have been translated into nine modern languages, and "The Man from Nowhere" has been published in Braille for the blind. Let us attempt to account for this astonishing success.

The *motif* of "The Man from Nowhere" is centuries old, and was adroitly and spicily used by the late Mrs. K. C. Thurston in "John Chilcote, M.P." less than twenty years ago—the *motif* of deceit, supported by physical duplication. In both the novels I have named the mimic is the better man of the two, and it is clear therefore that it is not for fundamental originality that nine foreign nations found it desirable to read "The Man from Nowhere." No; there is a better reason. In this tale, as in "Mr. Lyndon at Liberty," Mr. Bridges started with a situation out of which excitement had to flame and flow, and from the moment when the heroine attempts to murder the impersonator, we know that we are in the hands of a master of fiction. The turning of hate into love is one of the most alluring spectacles in the wide world. Frank Norris knew it and proved it in his art; so does Mr. Bridges.

Again, in "Mr. Lyndon at Liberty" we have a story starting at the moment of an escape from a convict prison. The fugitive is innocent and formidable: the contrasts of the story are very vivid, and not only on the spiritual side, for, as befits the grandson of a chairman of the Kitchen Committee in the House of Commons, Mr. Bridges emphasises the difference between a convict menu and a crack *restauranteur's* "symphony" with the thoughtfulness of an epicure. Danger hovering over love, threatening the larder and all that is cosy and jolly, has a special fascination for Mr. Bridges, though his best characters are too charming to require the baying of wolves behind them as an aid to our friendship, and though hubbub is not favourable to the exhibition of his finer talents.

With "The Lady from Longacre" the class of what I call Ruritanian fiction received a notable addition, for though the psychology of royalty seems hardly to be as much in Mr. Bridges' province as in Anthony Hope's, his two heroines are attractively feminine, and one of them succeeded in victimising me to a train that never reminds the passenger for Bagdad to change at Turnham Green.

"Greensea Island," the fourth of Mr. Bridges' long stories, is, in regard to plot, distinctly reminiscent of Sir Conan Doyle, but even when the novelist's creations act in an old plot such as the parent of this one which revolves around the innocent owner of miry money, one yields to the spell of spiritualised sex, just as one does in daily life after encountering the bleakness and hypocrisy which the sagacity of many people recommends as prudence and courtesy.

Mr. Bridges makes cleanly amorousness, staunch friendship, smiling valour, a fat purse (we must not forget that), a not too Christian revenge, and a happy ending, a solace to the lonely. Occasionally he pleases by perfection of invention as in the short stories, "Full Back for England" and "With the Conquering Turkey," but if we compare his perfect farce with his imperfect comedy we find that he deserves more praise for winning pretty smiles than for extorting loud laughter. For instance, from the point of view of the ingenious, "The Cruise of the *Scandal*" is dull as soon as it leaves off presenting a "risky" situation, and yet, owing to the charm of certain lovers, the story is immeasurably superior to "The Nadir Bandar" which is as ingenious as a folk-tale polished by a thousand tongues.

Lastly, to express Mr. Bridges in the space of a head-line, let us call him "A Master of Dialogue."

W. H. CHESSON.

THE READER.

ALFRED NOYES AND "THE TORCH-BEARERS."*

By Gilbert Thomas.

ELSEWHERE in this issue we review Mr. Alfred Noyes's "Selected Verse." Since that notice was written there has come before us a new volume by Mr. Noyes that confirms us still more emphatically in the opinion there expressed that, however much at times he may have let his facility run away with him, and however little he may conform to the popular standards of the moment, Mr. Noyes has a range of vision, a dignity, and a spiritual inspiration that place him in the foremost rank of contemporary poets. His new poem, "The Torch-Bearers," while complete in itself, is the first volume of a trilogy that will seek to fulfil a task that has long awaited the right hand. It is to be an epic of science. To small and bemuddled minds, "science" has commonly suggested something fundamentally antagonistic to "poetry," while to many even of the best intellects of the last century it seemed that the study of the rocks must necessarily undermine the Rock of Ages. To-day, happily, experience is making us wiser. We realise now that science and religion, starting from different ends, are boring the same tunnel through the mountain of human ignorance and error, and that, when eventually they join hands at the middle, they will have made a straight course for the lighted train of Truth. And if hitherto we have been blind to the poetry of science it has only been because our eyes were full of blood. Our heroes have been men of iron—despoilers and destroyers:

"Wars we have sung. The blind, blood-boltered kings
Move with an epic music to their thrones."

But the events of the past few years have cleansed our vision, and (never to revive, let us hope) all romance has faded from slaughter and brute force. There is another type of conqueror that claims at last "our epic music":

"Have you no song, then, of that nobler war?
Of those who strove for light, but could not dream
Even of this victory that they helped to win,
Silent discoverers, lonely pioneers,
Prisoners and exiles, martyrs of the truth
Who handed on the fire, from age to age;
Of those who, step by step, drove back the night
And struggled, year on year, for one more glimpse
Among the stars, of sovran law, their guide;
Of those who, searching inward, saw the rocks
Dissolving into a new abyss, and saw
Those planetary systems far within,
Atoms, electrons, whirling on their way
To build and to unbuild our solid world;
Of those who conquered, inch by difficult inch,
The freedom of this realm of law for man;
Dreamers of dreams, the builders of our hope,
The healers and the binders-up of wounds,
Who, while the dynasts drenched the world with blood,
Would in the still small circle of a lamp
Wrestle with death like Heracles of old
To save one stricken child."

It is in the history of this "nobler war"—the battle of science for light and knowledge and harmony—that Mr. Noyes has found the theme for what promises to be, when complete, his most ambitious and finest achievement. The second volume, which is now being written, will deal with the earth and will reveal the poetry of evolution; the third will turn to mechanical discovery, and will conclude with a general synthesis. The present book bids us gaze, through the eyes of the astronomers, at the heavens. The theme has been in the poet's mind for many years, but it first began to take definite shape, he tells us, "during what was to me an unforgettable experience—the night I was privileged to spend on a summit of the Sierra Madre mountains when the first trial was made of the new 100-inch telescope." The "Prologue" describes the Observatory which, upon the purple mountain's height, above the pine woods and the clouds, shone by day:

"No larger than the small white dome of shell
Left by the fledgling wren when wings are born.
By night it joined the company of heaven,
And, with its constant light, became a star.
A needle-point of light, minute, remote,
It sent a subtler message through the abyss,
Held more significance for the seeing eye
Than all the darkness that would blot it out,
Yet could not dwarf it. High in heaven it shone,
Alive with all the thoughts, and hopes, and dreams
Of man's adventurous mind. . . ."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Alfred Noyes.**

A new portrait.
Specially taken for The Bookman.

* "The Torch-Bearers." By Alfred Noyes. (Blackwood.)

XUM

The nine miles' zigzag ascent to that dizzy height is vividly brought before us, and then the wonderful experience of that night, with its first discovery of a moon of Jupiter, "a perfect rounded pearl, poised in the violet sky," is recorded in verse remarkable both for its spaciousness of atmosphere and for its meticulous precision of detail. And then, as the poet leaves the eager throng at the base of the majestic telescope, and wanders out alone into the silence of the night, he communicates to us the eternal voices of that silence; and having in the latter pages of the "Prologue" elucidated his scheme and purpose, he plunges with his first tale "into the middle of things, with the revolution brought about by Copernicus," though by means of an incidental lyric he gives a suggestion of what had gone before.

It was Copernicus who first dared the suggestion that the earth was not the fixed centre of the Universe, but was itself a moving planet. From him the torch passes to Tycho Brahe who, dying in exile, hands over his tables of the stars to a young man named Kepler, who, with their help, fashions his own great laws. Kepler corresponds with Galileo; and in the year of Galileo's death Newton was born. From Newton we pass to William Herschel and, finally, to Sir John Herschel, his son. In his "Tales of the Mermaid Tavern" Mr. Noyes adopted a very attractive form, half narrative and half lyrical, of presenting the characters and achievements of discoverers of a very different kind, and of the poets with whom they associated. In "The Torch-Bearers" he reverts, with even greater success, to the same method. Though throughout the poem there is the connecting link of history and of a philosophy which seeks to show that "spiritual values are not diminished or overwhelmed by the 'fifteen hundred universes' that passed in review before the telescope of Herschel," the story of the scientists is told with a wealth of human drama, in which are all the elements of humour and pathos, of hope battling with despair, of unswerving loyalty to truth, and of indomitable courage shaking its fist in defiance of difficulty, persecution, and the gibes of the vulgar.

There is deep pathos, for instance, in the figure of the blind Copernicus upon his death-bed, holding heroically to life till the book in which he has set down his discoveries should come from the printers, and, when the volume arrives just in time, saying happily at last his *nunc dimittis*, having fingered the lettering upon the cover. There is rich humour in such incidents as the King of Scotland's visit to Tycho Brahe in Denmark—the king, hitherto secure in his belief that he was God's vice-regent over the realm that was "the centre of the centre of all worlds," being much perturbed by the new notion that the earth itself was but one among innumerable moving stars. The visit of Sir Henry Wotton to Kepler gives Mr. Noyes scope not only for a very pleasing domestic idyll, but for much happy disquisition upon the relation of poetry to science The character and career of Galileo are presented to us by means of a number of letters passing between those most immediately concerned in his fortunes, and if the poet rejects as historically unsound the Galileo of popular legend, it is only to put a more human and convincing Galileo in his place. But perhaps the most delightful chapter in the book is that which centres around William Herschel, who was at once scientist and musician. In vision the author sees him conducting an orchestra before the beaux and the belles of Bath. As he waves his wand, he soliloquises; and, thrown into the form of Herschel's soliloquy, Mr. Noyes's faith in the unity of law which governs the Universe, and which expresses itself alike in mathematics and science, art and religion, reaches no mean heights of lyrical rapture. Quotation from a long narrative poem is as futile as it is unfair, and lack of space unhappily makes it impossible for us to do more than mention the fact that some charming lyrics besprinkle the narrative. Mr. Noyes has never written anything more beautiful in the lyrical vein than "The Shepherdess of the Sea."

We can indeed but hint at the varied store of riches contained in this first volume of "The Torch-Bearers." It is a poem great in aim, and (in our opinion) great in achievement, and if it does not immediately win the full recognition it deserves, it will only be because in theme and manner it is so widely removed from the poetical mood of the hour. Not that we would belittle the prevailing mode. The world is wide, and there is ample room in it for trim gardens with their carefully cultivated plants. Yet in such gardens the soul of man cannot find permanent satisfaction. Sooner or later the cloistered pleasance must pall; sooner or later we must find ourselves again upon the rugged mountain top, gazing into the star-sown heavens, and seeking, however vainly, to read the riddle of the Universe, or else plunging into the vortex of the city, striving, however inadequately, to interpret the ways of God to man, and of man to his brother man. And poetry, sooner or later, must escape from the graceful but narrow confines within which the "Georgians" have temporarily enclosed it. It must return to the big themes and find its inspiration once more, not in æsthetic contemplation, but in the passions and aspirations of the soul. Passion—the passion of love, the passion of endeavour, the passion for truth—has admittedly been too often glibly treated; but that does not alter the fact that it is only in such passion, and in the interpretation of it, that the greatest poetry can find its source. However much opinion may vary (and legitimately vary) as to the quality of Mr. Noyes's own achievement, we cannot but feel that by remaining true to the main tradition of poetry, during a time of transition and instability, he is rendering to English literature a service for which posterity will not forget to thank him.

CHARLES LAMB: A FEW MORE DETAILS.

BY MAJOR S. BUTTERWORTH.

DURING one of the "lively skirmishes" at one of Lamb's evening parties in the Temple there was a discussion most delightfully described by Hazlitt as to the persons one would wish to have seen, when Ayrton, turning short round upon Lamb, said: "I thought that you of the Lake School did not like Pope?" "Not like Pope! My dear sir, you must be under a mistake—I can read him over and over for ever!"

Lamb's admiration of Pope's works—or at least of some of them—must have been known to Procter who, in 1823, sent him a portrait of the poet which he acknowledged jubilantly:

"*April 13th*, 1823.

"DEAR LAD,—You must think me a brute beast, a rhinoceros, never to have acknowledged the receipt of your precious present. But indeed I am none of those shocking things, but have arrived at that indisposition to letter-writing, which would make it a hard exertion to write three lines to a king to spare a friend's life. Whether it is that the Magazine paying me so much a page, I am loath to throw away composition—how much a sheet do you give your correspondents? I have hung up Pope, and a gem it is, in my town room; I hope for your approval. Though it accompanies the 'Essay on Man,' I think that was not the poem he is here meditating. He would have looked up, somehow affectedly, if he were just conceiving 'Awake, my St. John.' Neither is he in the 'Rape of the Lock' mood exactly. I think he has just made out the last lines of the 'Epistle to Jervis' between gay and tender, 'And other beauties envy Worsley's eyes.' I'll be damn'd if that isn't the line. He is brooding over it, with a dreamy phantom of Lady Mary floating before him. He is thinking which is the earliest possible day and hour that she will first see it. What a miniature picture of gentility it is! Why did you give it me? I do not like you enough to give you anything so good."

Photo by A. Debenham, Southsea.

Alexander Pope.

From a contemporary painting.

Mr. Lucas gives a portrait of Pope in his large edition of the "Letters" from a painting by M. Dahl which does not answer in the least to Lamb's description, and it may be confidently stated that it is not the one to which he refers in his letter. In Dahl's portrait Pope *is* looking up; it may perhaps be admitted that he is in a meditative mood though it is more that of a writer struggling to find the proper word; and there is not much "gentility" about it. The foregoing particulars, one is inclined to think, make it improbable that an engraving of Dahl's painting was what Procter sent to Lamb.

The engraving here reproduced answers in every detail to Lamb's description. It forms the frontispiece to a magnificent edition in giant folio of Pope's "Essay on Man," published in 1819 by Robert Jennings; the poet is looking down not up; he is, without doubt, meditating; and the engraving may aptly be described as "a miniature piece of gentility." The portrait was painted by Jervas, who instructed Pope in painting in 1713, and is engraved by J. H. Robinson. In the "Advertisement" the publisher states that the engraving is "a most admirable and unique full-length portrait of Pope, from a painting, executed at an early period of life, by his friend Jervas, in the valuable collection of George Watson Taylor, Esq., M.P." and that is "an indisputably authentic and hitherto unedited portrait of Pope."

In the biographical sketch of Richard Cosway, R.A., in "Nollekens and His Times," Smith is probably referring to this portrait—though Jervas painted Pope's portrait more than once—when he writes: "From Berkeley-street, Mr. Cosway removed to Pall Mall, and for many years resided in the centre of three houses, which originally were only one. . . . In the middle part, as it is now divided, lived Jarvis the Painter, immortalised by Pope, whose whole-length portrait he painted, without exposing much of his deformity."

Neither Lamb nor Smith, it will be noticed, spells Jervas's name correctly; the former calls him *Jervis* and the latter, Jarvis.

GEORGE DYER'S MEMOIRS OF LAMB.

In my former article in last July BOOKMAN I stated that George Dyer contributed two short memoirs of Lamb to the *Christian Reformer* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*, respectively. In the former Dyer's initials are appended; the latter is unsigned. The fact of Dyer's having written two obituary notices is disclosed in the following letter by William King to Dyer:

"To *George Dyer, Esq.*,
"*14, Clifford's Inn,*
"*London.*

"DEAR SIR,

"I was much gratified on hearing that you and Mrs. Dyer were going to dine at Amen Corner with Mr. Tate. At the same time I learnt that you have now entirely lost your sight, which must sadly detract from your enjoyments, though perhaps the gradually increasing decay may have finally reconciled you to total deprivation.

"You would, I think, be well pleased with your visit. The Canon has the traits to win your regards—fine scholarship, vigorous understanding, a kind heart and generous sentiments. Though you could not now, alas! see your welcome in his honest face, you would feel it in the grip of his hand, hear it in the tone of his voice, and at once fall into free conversation. If the young ladies discovered your love of music, they would be ready to gratify it.

"The chief purpose of my letter is to thank you for the two little memoirs of your amiable friend Charles Lamb, dictated by yourself; but I have also something more to say about him. His death and the comments on his character and writings revived recollections of the disquiet that was at first caused you by the appearance of one of his essays in the *London Magazine*, and the correspondence to which it gave rise while we knew not who 'Elia' was. To your mind also this event may have brought back similar remembrances, and an anxiety may have very naturally arisen, which you perhaps have too great delicacy to avow, as to the fate of the long, confiding letter which you wrote to me respecting your 'commencing

life,' etc., as 'Elia' phrased it. You may be wishful that the particulars should not be lost, and yet be fearful about my imprudent or improper use of the little sketch. It has never been shown to any one and now, as the blotted original could hardly be made out so as to be fluently read to you, I have destroyed it, after first making the single fair copy which I send you. The hiatus, indicated by stars towards the end, was caused by my putting into the fire, some years ago, a small portion of your MS. which, if I remember rightly, contained some reflections on the 'Ædes Valpianæ' which it then seemed advisable to commit to the flames.

"Make my respects to Mrs. Dyer, and believe me,

"Yours, my dear Sir, most sincerely,

"WM. KING.

"Richmond, Yorkshire.

"*March 21st*, 1835."

Dyer's acquaintance with King went back a good number of years, for, after the appearance of Lamb's Elia essay "Oxford in the Vacation" in the October number of the *London Magazine*, 1820, King wrote to Dyer calling his attention to Elia's details of the latter's "commencing life" as "usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster at . . . at a salary of eight pounds per annum, with board and lodging, etc." Whereupon Dyer wrote the letter referred to by King. (This letter was after Dyer's death published in *The Mirror*, Vol. XXXVIII, 1841.) On receiving Dyer's letter, King apparently wrote a letter of complaint to the editor of the *London Magazine* and, from a remark under "The Lion's Head" in the November number of the magazine to "W. K."—informing him that he "will see we have *made use* of his paper; and we trust he will excuse the liberty we have taken with the communication"—it is very probable that the "liberty" taken with his letter was the forwarding of the letter to Lamb who replied to "W. K." in the following number. The offending paragraphs were omitted when the Elia essays were reprinted in book form in 1823.

Dyer's first biographical sketch appeared in the January issue of *The Christian Reformer*, 1835, and is here reproduced:

"THE LATE CHARLES LAMB.

"We now announce the decease of an amiable, benevolent and ingenious man, Mr. Charles Lamb, who died at Edmonton, after a few days' illness, on Saturday, the 27th December last, in the 61st year of his age. Mr. Lamb was well known to the public as a man of literature, and the memoirs of men of literature are often traced in their writings. Thus, in the case of Mr. Lamb, we collect that he was descended from a family in Lincolnshire, but was born in London, and received his education in Christ's Hospital; that at an early period he became a clerk in the India House, where he was greatly esteemed for his good humour; that he removed from it, at length, with a handsome annuity (being placed on the superannuated list); and that he lived in intimacy with the first geniuses and poets of the time.

"The following is a list of his published works as correct as we can give them: (Here follows a list of Lamb's books.)

"It is but justice to Mr. Lamb to say, that in the above works he has in general displayed as much literary taste as he has pathos and wit; his peculiar talent was humour, and his principal delineations are taken from private and domestic life; but he is always pleasing, and his style is rather after the manner of our old English masters, of whom he was a professed admirer (although we do not consider him in the light of an imitator,) rather than of those authors termed classical, on whom he was taught to put so high a value at public school; and though he continued to read and admire the latter, he chose to be considered as an English writer of the old school.

"The above list will, we think, present a true picture of the late Mr. Charles Lamb; for, what he appears in his writings before the public, he was seen to be in his life and conversation among his friends. He was sociable in his manners, critical and exact in his taste, of a rich imagination and a most sprightly wit; and as a man, humane in his feelings and benevolent in his actions. His jokes, which were always kept within the bounds of decorum, never lost him a friend, nor made him an enemy. To sum up the whole, we consider him to have been a person possessed of the finest qualities, both of head and heart.

"Mr. Lamb's amiable disposition eminently fitted him for domestic life, but he was never married: he lived forty years in a most tender friendship with an only sister; they were similar in their pursuits and studies, in their joys and sorrows, their affections and recreations, and may be referred to as the most perfect model of fraternal and sisterly love. Miss Lamb was the authoress of an excellent work, entitled 'Mrs. Leycester's School,' which was brought out under the superintendence of her brother.

"It does not appear from Mr. Lamb's writings that he intermeddled much in the political and theological disputes of the times; but to the estimation in which he held our old dramatic writers and poets, we must add the admiration which he always felt for the political works of Milton, Sydney, and other writers of the same class. Nor was he unacquainted with many of our best Puritan authors, whom he respected for their earnestness, variety and seriousness, and above all for their sincerity; and being of a quiet, peaceable disposition, he was fervent in the praise of George Fox and the founders of the Society of Friends called Quakers, although he never joined their society, and did not separate himself from the Church of England, to which he was trained at Christ's Hospital.

"Clifford's Inn. G. D."

The memoir in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which I now transcribe, and which, as stated above, is unsigned, appeared in the number for March, 1835. From the similarity of the style and the recurrence in it of the phrases used in the earlier notice there does not seem to be much room for doubt in ascribing it to Dyer:

"MR. CHARLES LAMB.

"*Dec.* 27.—At Edmonton, after a short illness, aged 60, Mr. Charles Lamb, a gentleman well known to the public for his many pleasing works in prose and verse.

"Mr. Lamb was a native of Lincolnshire. In his 8th year he was sent to Christ's Hospital, where he derived his taste for general literature, and his fitness for the pursuits of commercial life. He continued there till 1789, about which time he obtained a situation as clerk in the East India House, where he continued till the year 1825, and then retired, with a handsome annuity, on the superannuated list.

"Mr. Lamb's principal works were as follow: A small volume entitled 'Blank Verse,' printed in 1798 in conjunction with his friend Charles Lloyd; 'Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets,' 1808; Two dramatic pieces, 'John Woodvil,' a tragedy, and 'Mr. H.,' an afterpiece. 'Rosomond Grey,' a beautiful pathetic tale, and 'Old Blind Margery.' The Works of Charles Lamb, 2 Vols., 1818. 'Elia,' 1823, a collection of Essays, which were the most admired of his works, and appeared originally in the *London Magazine*. 'Album Verses,' 1830. 'The adventures of Ulysses' and 'Tales from Shakespeare,' 2 Vols. The Last Essays of 'Elia,' 1833. Subsequently to his specimens of the English Dramatic Poets, he published a second series, which appeared in Mr. Hone's Every Day Book, under the head of the 'Garrick Papers,' extracted from the valuable collection in the British Museum, and that work is illustrated with very valuable notes by Mr.

Lamb. To this list of his productions may be added a small poem entitled 'Satan in quest of a wife'; and he also aided his sister, Miss Mary Lamb, in her elegant little work entitled 'Mrs. Leycester's School.'

"On considering Mr. Lamb as diligently engaged in the pursuits of commercial life, it might surprise us that he could find leisure to write so much for the public; but the truth is, his faculties were extraordinary. The wit that he brought with him from school continued to flow uniformly and to increase through the whole course of his life. It was almost as natural with him to say witty things as to breathe; he could not enter a room without a joke, and he may be said to have almost conversed in extemporaneous humour. Nor did his discourse consist of merely sportive pleasantries; they had often the force of eloquence, joined with the solidity of argument, enlivened and softened by a humanity and benevolence which invariably beamed in his countenance. Perhaps, too, they were a little increased by his infirmities; for he had a defect in his utterance, which gave a somewhat of quaintness and peculiarity of tone to his conversation. Overflowing as his spirits were, they never exceeded the bounds of propriety and decorum; and towards the fair sex, though he was never married, he never failed to evince the kindest feelings and purest respect.

"Mr. Lamb has left behind him no other relation but the sister already mentioned, who is as amiable in disposition as himself, and who possesses a considerable share of literary talent. They were similar in their characters, their manners, and their studies; and there cannot be well conceived a more perfect example of fraternal and sisterly love, and untiring friendship, than that which existed between them, and which Mr. Lamb has elegantly alluded to in one of his poems, and likewise in one of his Papers, entitled 'Mackery End'; wherein he says, 'I wish that I could throw into a heap the remainder of our joint existences, that we might share them in equal division,—but that is impossible.'

"The present tribute of respect to the memory of this estimable gentleman, is offered by the same pen which gave a previous account of Mr. Lamb's works in the Gentleman's Magazine."

THOMAS GRIFFITHS WAINEWRIGHT, *alias* JANUS WEATHERCOCK.

It has been generally considered, on the authority of Talfourd, that this notorious scoundrel—the one-time friend of Charles Lamb before his villainy had been brought to light, and a frequent contributor to the *London Magazine*—was, before he began his literary career, a cavalry officer. Talfourd writes: "It was whispered that he had been an officer in the Dragoons." Such however was not the fact. He was what is called in the Army a "foot-slogger." He was gazetted an Ensign in the 16th (Bedfordshire) Regiment of Foot on April 14th, 1814, but his army career was of short duration as he had resigned his commission before July of the following year.

THE DIVERSITY OF DION CLAYTON CALTHROP.

BY LOUIS J. MCQUILLAND.

THE mercurial temperament of Dion Clayton Calthrop is as apparent in his latest book, "Tremendous Adventures" as his first. Here are all the qualities that have endeared him to tens of thousands of readers—whimsicality, tenderness, simplicity, sophistication, wit, sentiment, buoyancy, tragedy, geniality, cynicism, romance, realism—blended in the most bewildering and attractive manner possible.

I have a grudge against Calthrop in his realistic fantasy that he does not give us nearly enough of Stephen Frogmore after his evolution from a kind of Tulkinghorn to a kind of David Copperfield. The saturnine lawyer had a beautiful romance which flowered and faded in a remote past:

"Forty years ago Mr. Frogmore had his one crowded hour of glorious life—the crowded hour lasted three months to be precise. He had loved, and his love had been returned. He had, with the whole strength of his strong nature, been devoured and consumed by the divine fire, and Sophy Curlet had died. Mr. Frogmore had died then in spirit; nothing was left of his fire but ashes."

Photo by H. Walter Barnett. **Mr. Dion Clayton Calthrop.**

The author gives old Stephen a little of the power of the phœnix just before death, in the short space of repose which his doctors has insisted on too late. In a golden space of countryside bright but peaceful, the Happy Valley in South Devon, Sophy came to him, much as she has been in life, but with a butterfly gentleness:

"She was ridiculously sweet, tender, but not shy. She seemed to have been blown there as softly as thistledown. She had the most absurd parasol, a thing that would not have shaded a mouse, white satin with moss-roses and forget-me-nots embroidered on it, and with an ivory stick to it which a child, handling it carelessly, would snap.

"'You have come back to me, Stephen, after all these years?'

"With his hands digging into the turf he whispered, 'Yes.'"

That meeting between the old man and his young love is to me the most tremendous adventure in

Calthrop's chronicles of the Happy Valley; but the characters who carry on the main body of the action are Mr. Frogmore's faithful clerk, Henry Belton, his delicious wife, Rose, and the fascinating but disturbing Pindar Willoughby, who cuts across their married content.

The best thing one can say about the bucolic Henry is that he is a faithful trustee of the Sophy Curlet Horticultural College, whose rose-blooms are a recurring sweet requiem for the girl of the fairy parasol. I will say no more about Pin and Rose and the fairy godmother, Lady Angelina, since Dion Clayton Calthrop's devotees would frown on me for betraying their secrets; but I will dwell instead on the real-life romance of Calthrop as an author.

Calthrop, who is as much playwright as novelist, and as much painter as either, is of French, Irish and English blood, and comes of a family which has been closely identified with the stage for generations. His grandfather, Dion Boucicault, was the famous author of "The Shaughraun," "Arrah-na-Pogue," and other robust melo-comedies of Irish character which delighted old London audiences; his father was "Handsome John Clayton," who played dashing rôles in Pinero's early farces and comedies; that well-graced young actor, Donald Calthrop, is his brother; the irresistible Irene Vanbrugh is his aunt; so Calthrop was practically cradled in a property-basket over which good fairies watched: he owes his main success in life to the fairies and to the happy disposition they gave him.

Dion began life as an artist, and laboured strenuously with paint in Paris. He had exhibits at the Salon and the Academy. His career as an artist was apparently decided for life when he began to suffer from insomnia. Finding he could not sleep at night, he penned fanciful little articles which first found admittance in a brilliant periodical, since forgotten, called *The Butterfly*. These prose sketches lightly pressed him out of his pictorial work in the Beaux Arts.

His first book, very appropriately, was "The Guide to Fairyland," illustrated by himself. Of the many lightsome volumes that followed, his favourites are, in fiction, "Perpetua" and "St. Quin"; in essay form, "Etcetera," and in art a three-volume "History of English Costume," with his own illustrations in black-and-white and colour. Many years of research, eager, but patient, went to the making of a standard work of immense value to students of dress through the ages, which is a favourite prize-book in American colleges.

"Yes," he stated with a pensive smile when I asked him about "Museum headache" and its causes: "I still continue to suffer from it when I visit the Mecca of the books; but that indisposition is all in the day's work; and I love the Museum in spite of this dolour."

Readers of Calthrop's books imagine they are written with extraordinary ease; and in a sense they are: "I love my work, every hour of it; but it generally takes me two years to get a book dovetailed into the right shape. I write my books in the street."

I suppose the speaker saw some incredulity in my eyes; for he said with laughing determination: "I mean that literally. When I am walking in London or the country I think out my situations, and even my sentences; and in the morning I have the picture of the pages in my head, and commit them to paper just as they came to me."

Calthrop writes a beautiful neat hand, closely resembling Charles Dickens's, and practically without any erasures or additions. He likes using the pen, but balked at the typewriter, and was horrified by the mere cold, forbidding appearance of the dictaphone.

His two favourite novelists are Dickens and Robert Louis Stevenson; and the influence of both may be faintly traced in his works. Some months ago he had a very severe shock, as his eyes one day failed him, and he feared he was going blind. After a period of intense depression he was restored to the joy of life by the decision of a famous oculist that he was merely suffering from eye-strain and too much smoking. "I used to have a box of cigarettes at my elbow when I worked," he confessed, "and half a dozen well-primed pipes; and I smoked away like billy-o. Now I smoke not at all when I am working, and enjoy tobacco much more in relaxation. At the present time I am having a rest from actual writing, but am planning out the finish of a new play, 'England's Oak,' a kind of modern 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' with humble obeisances to the Bard.

"At one time I was so rushed with two plays that I used to take my lunch in a cab. This was when I was busy on 'À La Carte' for Gaby Deslys at the Palace, and 'Harlequinade' at the St. James's with Granville Barker. I wrote and designed the dresses and scenery of both plays, and produced one of them. I enjoyed my light meals in the cab when speeding from one theatre to another until the time came when I took two calls on the one night. Incidentally I may say that poor Gaby was one of the kindest, jolliest and most generous colleagues that any author-producer ever had. She was compact of fun and good nature."

Other plays from Calthrop's agile hand are "The Old Country," in which his friend, Gerald Du Maurier, played lead, and "The Southern Maid." As producer he is proud of designing the costumes for Tree's magnificent presentation of "Faust," and of getting the real furniture of the period for a Royal Command performance of Bulwer Lytton's "Money" (or rather an act of that ingenuous old stager).

Dion Clayton Calthrop is an authority on furniture, and has many fine specimens of different periods in his sunny flat. But he seems to collect almost anything that attracts his fancy. He has, for example, a complete set of constables' batons, including one used by a famous Bow Street runner. Sir Nevile Macready when he visited Calthrop urged that he should leave these curious instruments to "The Yard," which has only two on view.

One of his most graceful collections is of walking-canes of different periods; but he is just as keen on old prints, old china, and even ancient belaying-pins.

Our author has a great love of the sea, and his favourite amusements are swimming and deep-sea fishing. During the war he was Commander in the Royal Naval Reserve.

I asked Calthrop for his philosophy of life, and he replied: "I do not take myself seriously, for life is serious enough of itself. I find the world a good place just because there are so many good people in it in spite

of all the dismal conditions of the war and after. If we all endeavour to be happy in ourselves, the whole current of humanity will carry away the little cares of the world, if not the great. In society there are forces of evil, but evil people are in the minority. All round this visible temporal world there are also joyous influences which can only be seen by the eyes of a mirthful faith. I don't believe in fairies that you can kodak, but fairies, or their similitudes, do exist. The actual fairies in our superficial world are children."

Calthrop is one of the lucky men who can talk to children in their own language—a secret and difficult task, even for an enchanted Celt who spoke French before he learned English.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

MARCH, 1922.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II, IV and V are the same each month, and that for the next two months the first prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best advice in not more than eight lines of original verse to any well-known public character.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR FEBRUARY.

I.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is awarded to Elsie B. Granville, Kelvin Lodge, Browning Avenue, Boscombe Manor, Bournemouth, for the following:

THE FISHERMAN'S LASS.

When I runs my little skiff ashore,
With all its shining load;
When I trudges thro' the twilight,
Up the winding wind-swept road;
I whistles merrily a tune,
Though toil-worn I may be;
For I've a little lass at home
Who's everything to me!

My lass, she ain't a beauty,
Like one reads about in books;
And she ain't the kind of gal what thinks
A deal about her looks;
No dimples dance upon her cheek,
Her hair, quite straight and brown;
But I wouldn't swop my Mary
For the prettiest lass in town!

Her mouth—it ain't a Cupid's bow,
Nor starry are her eyes;
She ain't got much book learning,
And she's not so very wise,
But if the squalls should sweep our way,
And lash to foam life's sea,
Her love, unchanged thro' changing years,
My beacon light shall be!

We also select for printing:

IN PRAISE OF ONE.

Oh, little gods of wilderness,
Be good to one who sees
The fingers of the wind caress
The ruffled locks of trees,
Bend all the wilding wood to her
To blossom to her hand;
Oh, little gods, be good to her,
Whose love you understand.

Oh wilderness, take heart again,
And welcome one who hears
The gentle harper in the rain
Harp with a sound of tears,
Bid sunlight fall like wine on her,
And rainbow arcs entice
The coloured webs to shine on her
From looms of Paradise.

(Eisdell E. Tucker, 181, Grove Lane, Denmark Hill, S.E.5.)

THE LITTLE HOUR.

The little hour is here to-night,
So strangely sweet and wonderful
That trees are trembling with delight,
And all the dewy cups are full
Where fairies sip, and gently shake
Their silken hammocks as they wake.

To-night the earth has nestled down
In fields and pastures round about,
With eider from the thistledown

Miss Teresa Hooley

whose new book of poems, "Songs of the Open," has just been published by Jonathan Cape.

To keep the cool grey shadows out;
And nightlights ready in the sky
To tell the hour of waking by.

So quiet the little acorns sit
Upon the oak, and you can see
The corners where the spiders knit
Their dainty webs so cunningly;
Only you must on tiptoe go
And not let other people know.

Nothing is new, and nothing old,
But dreams are hanging overhead;
And all the things you have been told,
And everything that you have read,
Could never seem so sweet as this—
The little hour when fairies kiss.

(Muriel Garbutt, 43, Victoria Street, St. Albans.)

We select for special commendation the lyrics by S. R. Noyes (Parys, South Africa), D. C. Thomson (Oxford), Freda Isobel Noble (London, E.), Lucy Malleson (West Kensington), Una Malleson (West Kensington), Margaret Brown (Harrow-on-the-Hill), Winifred Mudie (Darlington), Rudolf Robert (South Kensington), Marjorie Holmes (Bentham), Miss D. H. Glasson (Sydney, Australia), M. Hurl (Barnsbury), Dorothea Humphreys (Manchester), Ivan Adair (Dublin), Lorna Keeling Collard (Wincanton), V. Walker (Whitehaven), Percival Hale Coke (Skegness), Violetta Thurstan (El Burg-el-Arab, Egypt), Edith Allen (Bristol), Agnes Dewar Scott (Woolwich), Winnifred Tasker (Llandudno), Mariquita Gutierrez (San Sebastian, Spain), Julia Wickham Greenwood (Gibraltar), Angela Cave (Bournemouth), Arthur C. Inman (Boston, Mass.), Alice E. Oldacre (Stoke-on-Trent), Hilda de Fleury (London, S.W.), W. Handlen (Oxford), F. Davidson (Bryansford, County Down), Frederic Warner (Auckland, N.Z.), Marshall Louis Martins (California), D. Freeman Larkin (Anerley), J. H. Warren (Birkenhead), Donald Stewart (Sutton), R. Fortescue Doria (Cheltenham), R. Sercombe Smith (Bromley, Kent), L. Ivy Hale (Bristol), Sybil C. Knight (Guildford), Lilian M. Belletti (Stanwell), Miss E. R. Faraday (Orleton), John A. Bellchambers (Highgate Hill), Geoffrey H. Wells (Cardiff), W. H. Woodzell (Plymouth), F. O. Call (Lennoxville, Canada), V. D. Goodwin (Gillingham), J. R. Wilmot (Birkenhead), Beth Collis (Esquimalt, B.C., Canada), Kathleen Ida Noble (London, E.).

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Lorna Leathem, The White House, Neville's Cross, Durham, for the following:

THE MAN IN THE TWILIGHT.
BY RIDGWELL CULLUM. (Cecil Palmer.)
"I cannot see what flowers are at my feet."
JOHN KEATS, *Ode to a Nightingale.*

We also select for printing:

THE KINGDOM ROUND THE CORNER.
BY CONINGSBY DAWSON.
"Man never is, but always to be blessed."
POPE, *Essay on Man.*

(Jessie E. Greenwood, Lyncroft, Maldon Road, Wallington.)

MADE TO MEASURE. BY MRS. HENRY DUDENEY. (Collins.)
"I'd a swallow-tail coat of a beautiful blue."
W. S. GILBERT, *Trial by Jury.*

(Rev. F. Hern, Rowlands Castle, Hants.)

TO HIM THAT HATH. BY RALPH CONNOR. (Hodder & Stoughton.)
"Now that I am myself a master,
My gains come softer still and faster."
R. L. STEVENSON, *Robin and Ben.*

(Isobel Simpson, Gowan Bank, Dundee.)

HUMBUG." BY E. M. DELAFIELD. (Hutchinson.)
"Assume a virtue, if you have it not."
SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet*, Act iii, Sc. 4.

(C. K. T. Palmer, "Jesmond," The Park, West Hartlepool.)

THE PROFITEERS. BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM. (Hodder & Stoughton.)
"We 'ave got 'old of 'the needful.'"
RUDYARD KIPLING, *M.I.*

(Sidney S. Wright, 171, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent.)

III.—The PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best motto, original or selected, for the Irish Free State, is awarded to A. W. Moore, Mill House, Hothfield, Ashford, Kent, for the following:

"Let our object be our Country, our whole Country, and nothing but our Country." (DANIEL WEBSTER.)

We specially commend Miss J. Shaw (Harrogate), C. K. Rhodes (Deal), Miss Duffin (Belfast), Ethel G. Jackson (Chesterfield), Sidney Anderson (West Didsbury), A. Eleanor Pinnington (Exeter), R. Speight (Harrogate), A. C. Marshall (Edinburgh), A. E. M. Brickenden (Gorey, Ireland), Alianori V. Brickenden (Gorey, Ireland), Miss C. Feery (Bushey), C. Ashley Brown (Saffron Walden).

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to Geoffrey H. Wells, 14, Essich Street, Roath Park, Cardiff, for the following:

THE LOVE STORY OF ALIETTE BRUNTON.
BY GILBERT FRANKAU. (Hutchinson.)

This new novel, written with immense vigour in that clipped, clear-cut English its author has used in earlier books, recounts the social and other adventures of a beautiful married woman who leaves her K.C. husband to live with her lover. These, with such extra attractions as a fox hunt, a murder trial, and so on, make a good evening's entertainment, though it is hard to regard the book as possessing any particular value as a serious study of the divorce question.

We also select for printing:

CRITICISM: MUSIC AND LETTERS.
BY W. J. TURNER. (Methuen.)

The author of these very original essays sees things from a different standpoint to the ordinary musical critic who, scalpel in hand, is so busy dissecting the body of music that the soul often eludes him entirely. Mr. Turner deals with the soul, and at the same time does not lose sight of the demands of the body. You may not agree with all his statements. You can't. But he makes you think. He makes you sit up, and perhaps figuratively turn up your sleeves for a fight. Like a draught of ice cold spring water, he is invigorating and refreshing.

(Lilian M. Belletti, Selwood Lodge, Stanwell, Middlesex.)

BARBARY: THE ROMANCE OF THE NEAREST EAST. BY MACCALLUM SCOTT.
(Thornton Butterworth.)

A little of history, a flavour of guide-book lore, a good deal of geographical detail, and many charming pieces of descriptive writing—these are some ingredients of this interesting book. One of the most attractive chapters is that entitled "The Street of Perfumes," which deals with the various aromatic essences to be purchased in Tunis, and the visions conjured up when they are released from their crystal prisons. Such chapters as that dealing with "Salammbo" may appear irrelevant, but the author has written of the country from all angles, and the result is as interesting as its subject.

(N. Butterfield, 163, Coventry Road, Ilford.)

THE YOUNG ENCHANTED. By HUGH WALPOLE.
(Macmillan.)

The skilful characterisation in this "romantic story" is an epitome of Life itself. It reveals the subtle influences of nationality, the inefficiency of selfishness, the efficacy of individual selflessness, and the constant conflict between the materialistic and spiritual tendencies in each human soul. There is no didactic element. The characters naturally evolve, playing their several parts in this drama of human life. We live with them, pitying the hapless Clare, feeling for Peter, gladly suffering the "rich fool," Victoria, rejoicing in Millie's and Henry's gay youthfulness, while we love with unwavering fidelity and devotion the fated master of Duncombe Hall.

(Alice Youle Hind, 5, Clarence Street, Brighton.)

We select for special commendation the reviews sent by James A. Richards (Tenby), Miss A. Mason (London, S.W.), Maude R. Fleeson (Manchester), Margery Hunter Woods (London, W.C.), Lilian M. Bridges (Salisbury), Enid Blyton (Beckenham), Blanche Weiner (Dulwich), Eric N. Simons (Sheffield), H. Corti (London, E.), M. Judson (Bowdon), Jean Kemp (Aberdeen), B. Noel Saxelby (Manchester), Winifred M. Davies (Derby), Bertha C. Priestley (London, W.C.), J. Parkinson (Letchworth), D. Mavor (London, N.W.), Ethel Mulvany (Dublin), Helen Louise Bell (Manchester), D. F. Fahy (London, S.W.), H. A. Bush, Jun. (Bolton), Dorothy S. Knox (Ilkley), G. W. Bowes (Blackburn), Bertie van Thal (London, N.W.), J. Harold Armstrong (Harrogate), H. Cotterill Davies (King's Bromley), Miss V. W. Ware (Eastleigh), Malcolm Hemphrey (Farnborough), Miss J. A. Jenkins (Liverpool), Kathleen Rice (Harpenden).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO THE BOOKMAN for the best suggestion is awarded to the Rev. F. Hern, Rowlands Castle, Hants.

THE GREATEST AMANUENSIS IN HISTORY.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER SMITH, THE FRIEND OF HANDEL.

By NEWMAN FLOWER.

THE average amanuensis to genius plays but a sorry part and is forgotten, a mechanical figure with no special claim to remembrance. But John Christopher Smith, to whose three sets of transcripts of Handel's music, which he made for the master, we are indebted for considerable knowledge of Handel, was a figure apart.

His discovery by Handel was a discovery for the permanent benefit of music. Smith was then a boy of thirteen. And the discovery was an accident. In 1716 Handel was travelling on the Continent when he chanced to meet at Anspach the boy's father of the same cognomen—John Christopher Smith. Smith the elder hailed from Handel's birthplace, Halle, in Saxony, and an old acquaintanceship was thus revived. He induced Smith to leave his family behind and come with him to London, where he made him treasurer of his performances.

Smith *père*—or Schmidt, which was his baptismal name—flourished exceedingly under Handel, and four years later he sent for his family to join him in London. Thither came his wife, a son, and two daughters. Handel conceived a keen liking for the boy because of the musical intelligence which was lying dormant in him. Young Smith was sent to Clare's Academy in Soho Square, and in his spare time Handel taught him music. The brilliance of the youth then began to appear. At the age of eighteen his proficiency was such that he had sufficient employment as a teacher to make him independent of his father, who continued to manage the Handelian box-office. He changed his name from Schmidt to Smith, and became, like the genius he served, a British citizen.

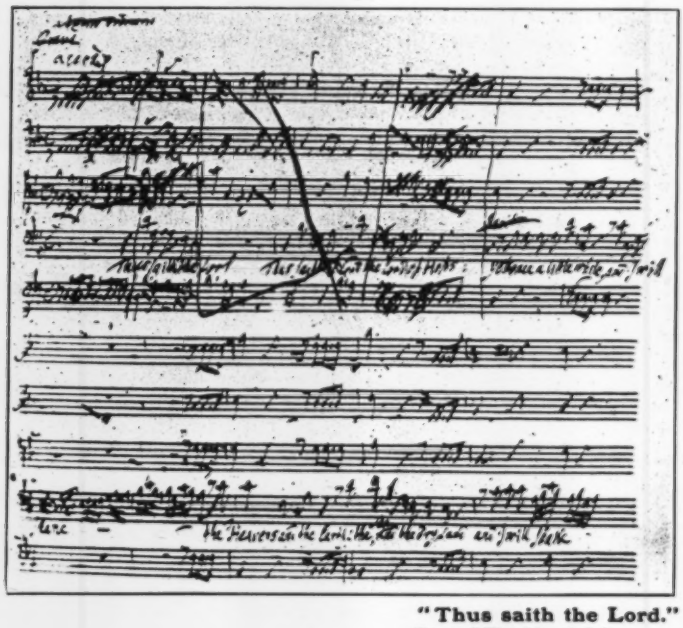
John Christopher Smith.
From the painting by Zoffani.

In the early twenties this boy produced his first opera, and, although he occupies no outstanding place as a composer, he is a certain figure in eighteenth century music. Not only Handel, but Pepusch taught him, so did Rosengrave. Thus did the boy become fitted for the position he was ultimately to fill.

The association of Handel and the two Smiths was intimate in the extreme. The elder Smith at this time was making the Handel transcripts. They seemed welded—the three—into a closeness of personality; and, although the younger Smith survived Handel by nearly forty years, he took to himself in his later years much of the character of Handel, saving only the same irascibility of temper.

The love of Handel for this young man was the affection of a father for a son. Smith *fils* was his son in all but blood-tie. He worked for Handel, not so much as an employee, but as a member of a family would work for its head.

All the later transcriptions of the Handel works are in the writing of Smith *fils*: a delightful clear writing, almost copperplate in its precision. And considering that Handel, in his moods when setting down a composition, pushed his thumb



"Thus saith the Lord."
From "The Messiah."
As Handel wrote it.

across a few bars of which he did not approve, and of which the ink was still wet, and added and deleted more freely than any author or composer ever known, Smith had no easy task. But the three copies he made are to this day as good as print.

Christopher Smith's temperament seemed to become more and more mellowed to Handel's as he grew elder. He became, as it were, an integral limb of the old man. And much as Handel appreciated Smith's father, the same link was missing between them. Smith the elder had something of Handel's irascibility; Smith the younger was always passive and forbearing.

The link between Handel and Smith *père* snapped violently one day at Tunbridge Wells. They had gone down there together, for what purpose is not clear. But Handel was almost blind. In the street they had a violent altercation, and without further word Smith left Handel where he was—an almost blind man in a strange town—to find his way home.

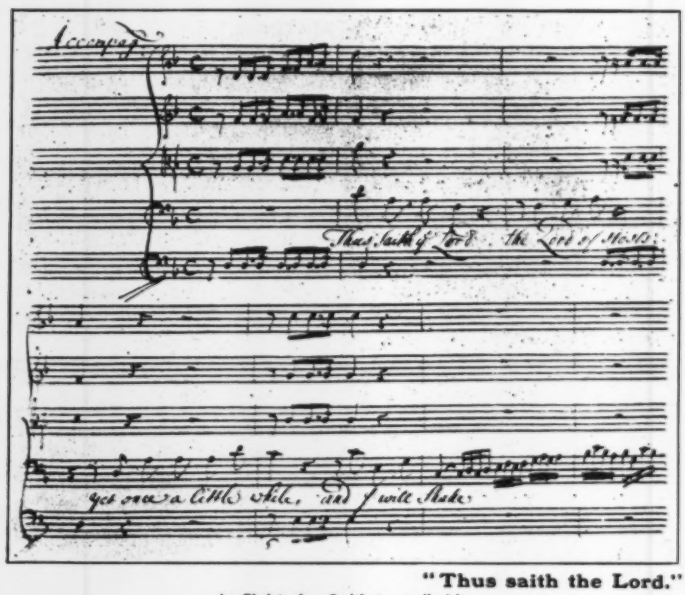
Handel, swift to the sense of hurt, declared he would never forgive Smith. When he found his way back to London he told the son that the breach was irrevocable, and that the thousand pounds he had left his father in his will would pass to him. This was the first occasion on which the younger Smith ever reached a crisis with Handel. "What will the world say if you set aside my father and leave this legacy to me?" he retorted.

Handel never remembered an angry word for long after it was spoken. He did alter the will, and instead of leaving Smith's father one thousand pounds he left him two thousand four hundred pounds! But it was the son's refusal to receive the sacrament with Handel until he was at peace with the world that brought this about.

It is entirely due to the younger Smith that the majority of the Handel autographs are still in England. Handel left him all his manuscripts, his harpsichord on which nearly all his music had been composed, and the portrait of him by Denner—the best of the Handel portraits, and now in the proud possession of Mr. Arthur Hill, of New Bond Street. It was Handel's wish that all his manuscripts should go to the University Library at Oxford, but he having named the younger Smith as the inheritor of them, the situation was difficult. So he approached Christopher Smith one day and suggested that he should leave him three thousand pounds instead of the manuscripts. But Handel did not know Smith for the ardent disciple he was. He refused the offer. Handel had promised him those manuscripts; he wanted them; they were chapters from his life. So Handel stuck to his word.

Then came the sequel. When Handel died the King of Prussia offered Christopher Smith two thousand pounds for the manuscripts. But Smith did not intend that they should go out of England. He refused the offer, and *gave* them to the King of England. This generosity, and sense of fairness to a country and a royal dynasty that had befriended his master, are alone responsible for those manuscripts — which include the autograph of "Messiah," "Jephtha," and many other Handel treasures of unspeakable worth—being in the King's room at the British Museum to-day.

Of the three sets of Christopher Smith's copies of the Handel works, the history is briefly told. Between twenty and thirty volumes of one set were picked up for a song at Bristol by Victor Schoelcher—the Handel biographer — and presented by him to the library at Hamburg; the second set of something over a hundred volumes is divided between the British Museum and the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, and the third



"Thus saith the Lord."
As Christopher Smith transcribed it.

set, numbering nearly two hundred volumes, is in the possession of the writer, this set having been given by Jennens, the librettist of "Messiah" (to whom Smith gave it) to his cousin, the Earl of Aylesford, in the eighteenth century.

When Handel died Christopher Smith became a broken man. The great life that meant so much to him was gone; the soul that was drenched in melody had fled to another sphere. His own life seemed to stop. He composed a little, but his voice was but an echo of the greater voice that had passed. The uttermost had been torn out of him. He remained a pathetic figure, with a royal pension, living on a memory. For how could it be otherwise? There had been more than the link of an amanuensis with his employer. He could not be expected to forget that scene when, during the last years of Handel's blindness, "Samson" was performed at the theatre. Smith was at the organ, and Handel sitting blind beside the instrument, staring with eyes that saw not into space. And then came that wonderful melody to the words:

> "Total eclipse—no sun, no moon,
> All dark amid the blaze of noon——"

No wonder people wept. And probably the figure at the organ saw nothing of the still figure beside the instrument for his own tears.

When, towards the end of Christopher Smith's years, the great Commemoration of Handel was held at Westminster Abbey under the direction of Joah Bates, Smith was requested by the King to be present. The King assured him that he should be given a prominent seat. But the aged amanuensis and musician declined. Conscious of the honour, he pleaded his advanced age, and the emotion that such a celebration would involve to his feeble frame.

The King did not know, and the public never knew, that the soul of Christopher Smith died with Handel, and that he then became no more than a flower that wilts in the dark after the sun has gone.

DESMOND COKE.

By WILFRID L. RANDELL.

THE reading public is a strangely simple organism when appetite is concerned; once tickle its taste and it demands that you shall supply it henceforth with exactly the same sort of dish. And too often reviewers encourage the public. How dare Mr. Eden Phillpotts, for instance, select a theme not pertaining to Dartmoor? Is it possible that he can write well about anything else? We have bought your roast beef—excellent fare; we are not so sure that you can make a passable omelette!

Thus Mr. Desmond Coke has an assured name as a writer of school stories, which amounts to misrepresentation. He has written some finely thoughtful studies of school and college life; but he is first of all a man of the wider world, novelist and student of character — a position I shall prove, substantiate, enforce, and defend with immense pleasure, assuming in all readers a willingness to accept the suggestion that an author is entirely reasonable in using as a setting those scenes with which he is thoroughly familiar. But whatever or wherever the scene, it is character in interplay, change, development, that matters if you are a real writer and not merely a "producer" of novels; neglect it, and you are in danger of becoming a "best seller," with the certainty that twenty copies of your new book will go to and fro in every suburban morning and evening train for a month at least, time-killers for the million.

Photo by Histed **Mr. Desmond Coke.**

Mr. Coke proved his independence, his skill and sympathy, in "The Comedy of Age" (1906) wherein two sides of Oxford life are given. A comedy of age can only be rightly shown in pastel tints, gently and delicately, and the old don trying to climb out of the groove so deep that he could but peer over its edge, trying to be boyish at heart once more, trying to "chum up" to young fellows whom he only succeeds in puzzling, is a figure to be remembered. Laughed at, though he was full of vague sincerity; considered interfering when he wished to be sympathetic; thought half mad, though he was really returning to sanity, Radford is a character in the true spirit of comedy —for in him laughter and sadness are not far apart. He glories, at first, in being almost fossilised. "What's the use of it?" asks his friend of old, who comes to Oxford on a visit and has a serene contempt for the classics. "How does it touch life? You tar, then whitewash, some one who's been dead two thousand years. Who's the happier for all the ancient pillars upon earth?" Radford's awakening comes, and he attempts a friendship with

Lane, an undergraduate, and the bewilderment of youth trying to respond to the friendship of age is a secondary theme of the book. Lane in love with a photographer's pretty assistant worries Radford terribly, and the course of this one-sided "affair" is very neatly conveyed. In time, Radford is left to his lectures and his studies—but he is no longer a fossil; he has become human. The book thus scantily summarised is one of the best examinations of the reaction of two totally different characters that I have read, and their gradual, reluctant change from polite antagonism to sympathetic comprehension is conveyed with subtle skill.

A quality which distinguishes the novels of Mr. Coke from those of very many other authors is his ease and grace in the use of epigram; from any book of his a score of tightly-packed phrases that present some aspect of life—life in miniature—could be chosen to illustrate this. It is not that other writers neglect epigrams; they manufacture them by the cartload, and that is where the trouble comes in—it is so obviously the "clever" thing to do. A happy idea arrives—let us keep the hero waiting while we slip it into its pretty costume. Women love these smart sayings, children cry for them. There lies danger; from the artistic point of view it is fatal to be "smart." But one can create philosophic little epigrams without the sin of "smartness"—at least, Mr. Coke can; and his brief interludes always mean something, are always pertinent to the plot. This sentence from the book I have just mentioned: "Scholastic fame rests often on unfinished labours, and many a published work has wrecked a giant reputation," sends a searching gleam on poor Radford which tells more than a page of description. "Youth's emotions atone for their narrowness by their great depth," shows the position of young Lane in love quite clearly. In "Helena Brett's Career" comes the sardonic touch. "Every man, almost, has one trusted friend whose advice he does not take in all moments of perplexity." Here is a delightful bit of cynicism from "The Golden Key": "Where men drift, in matters of emotion, women navigate."

An epigram might be termed a truth in fancy dress . . . and here am I, stealing Mr. Coke's thunder without a blush; but I want to convey some idea of the legitimate use of the epigram. Rightly employed, it relieves the perhaps too even flow of plot; but it also contributes to the elucidation of either plot or character. A good material may be dull of hue, or too close of texture—hence embroidery and the emphasising of figure lines and the reflection of light in the right place. Such "embroidery," which is not purposeless, nor merely decorative, is by no means superfluous, though some austere people profess to think it so.

"Helena Brett's Career" (1913) and Mr. Coke's latest novel "Pamela Herself," have a similar theme in the incompatibility of a couple who are happily married. This seems contradictory; but Brett the novelist and his wife, and Kitson the head master and *his* wife, fell in love with the highest hopes, and for a time were actually happy. Brett, putting it mildly, is irritating; he is a literary man with a terrific opinion of himself and his Work. Everything in the home must be subservient to his Work—his after-lunch nap (disguised as the time when he was supposed to be "keeping in touch with modern movements" by reading the weekly reviews) is sacred; the slightest interruption, the displacement of a vase on his study table, spoils his "flow of ideas," and upsets him for the day. His wife, gradually penetrating to his real self, bored and lonely, joins a debating circle, makes friends with a young artist, and writes a book, which is published anonymously and makes a hit. The book, in fact, is her diary intensified, in which she has drawn a dreadfully accurate portrait of her husband. How the secret comes out, how Brett receives the news, and the sarcasm of the critics—it all makes a splendid climax, and my only regret is that Helena did not leave her husband. She flares up magnificently, but the flame dies down, and one feels that it is only a matter of time, in spite of the reconciliation, before there will be renewed and more serious trouble. Brett was "gey ill to live with," though he had some good points. And one picture of him, for which I am for ever grateful, is his chest-expansion as the guest of the evening at a suburban "literary society." The tin god simply coruscates with comedy.

Of "Pamela Herself" I will say only that it is a strong and courageous book, in which Mr. Coke has the School, with its traditions, as background, a Head almost fanatic in severe adherence to duty, a young wife who cannot grow into the shape he desires, and other important characters who play their parts in deadly earnest. Pamela's dramatic outburst of indignation at the expulsion of her own son—their son—from the school for an offence that might, with tact, have been pardoned, is one of the finest scenes in any of Mr. Coke's novels.

These books are representative of Mr. Coke's best work, and his many others—"The Golden Key," a fascinating study of youth in London; "Beauty for Ashes," books for boys and about boys; the humorous "Belinda Blinders" volumes, of which the latest is "The Nouveau Poor" published last year—must be left out of this article except for the mere allusion; though I should have liked to linger on the deliberate absurdities of "The Nouveau Poor," so full of laughter irresistible. There is one book, however, on another plane. When Mr. Coke showed me his silhouettes, his pictures, and his wonderfully beautiful (and tastefully displayed) collection of curios of all kinds, every one a work of art or delicate handicraft, I began to understand the pleasure he must have taken in writing "The Art of Silhouette," which expert knowledge and enthusiasm combined make an ideal contribution to a little-known subject. Justin, the hero of "The Golden Key," finds solace for his loneliness in collecting, and makes friends with Dumond, keeper of an antique shop, a queer character suggestive of the art of Dickens; probably there is some foundation in fact for the episode. Even from this, one might guess at the author's hobby—something more than a hobby; a delight to him and to his friends.

So, feeling that I have only suggested the truth to life in matters small as well as great of Mr. Coke's fiction, and the scholarly versatility of his mind, I must close with another suggestion—that those who

do not happen to know his work should make some attempt to do so. They will feel, behind "the story in it," in each book, a thoughtful personality to whom careless writing is an impossibility, and who possesses that most effective combination—an ideal of life, as well as an ideal of style.

New Books.

SELECTED NOYES.*

Mr. Alfred Noyes.

There are only a few new poems in this volume by Mr. Alfred Noyes. Of these the most notable is "A Victory Ball," which, the author explains in a foot-note, "is not an attack on one of the most graceful of the arts, but was suggested by one particular method of celebrating the last hour of the world's Calvary." The poem breathes the voluptuous atmosphere of the worst type of modern ball-room. The shades of the men who died for the New World which the politicians promised us watch the

> "Fat wet bodies
> Go waddling by"

and the children fresh from school begging for doses of the best cocaine.

> "'What did you think
> We should find," said a shade,
> 'When the last shot echoed
> And peace was made?'
> 'Christ,' laughed the fleshless
> Jaws of his friend,
> 'I thought they'd be praying
> For worlds to mend . . .'
>
> "'Pish,' said a statesman
> Standing near,
> 'I'm glad they can busy
> Their thoughts elsewhere!
> We mustn't reproach 'em;
> They're young, you see.'
> *'Ah,' said the dead men,*
> *'So were we!'*"

For the rest, the book is made up of selections from Mr. Noyes's previous works. It was a happy idea that inspired him to issue such a volume, and we shall be surprised if it does not do something towards strengthening his reputation even in those literary circles where it has been the fashion for some years past to ignore or to belittle his work. It is true that Mr. Noyes's poetry is quite out of harmony with the most popular contemporary trend of verse and criticism; he has not bowed the knee to the Squirearchy that has arisen in our midst. But on that account the popular critics of the moment should not have given way to prejudice, as they certainly have done. Unfortunately, it cannot be denied that Mr. Noyes has himself made it easier for them to do so. He has unquestionably written too much; he has repeated himself far too frequently; he has often been altogether too glib and slapdash; with the inevitable consequence that his best work has been liable to become buried amid his worst. Even so, however, the critics of the new school have been very unfair to him; and to those critics this volume of his "Selected Verse" offers a direct challenge.

For in this slim book (there are only ninety pages) we have Mr. Noyes shorn of all his excesses. He has, it would seem, deliberately refrained from including any of his most "popular" poems. "The Barrel Organ" does not resound in these pages; "The Highwayman" is not here; there is nothing from "Drake"; there is a complete absence of the patriotic drum, and of pieces written upon special occasions; and there is nothing about Robin Hood or Old Japan. There is one long poem—"The Sign of the Golden Shoe"—from "Tales of the Mermaid Tavern." Apart from that, most of the twenty-six poems selected are quite short and are of a kind that obviously invite judgment by the narrower and more academic standards of criticism. And it is difficult to imagine how, after a careful reading of this volume, any critic, holding by those standards, can fail to appreciate that the best of Mr. Noyes's work can very easily bear comparison with that of the much-belauded "Georgians." "The May Tree," "The Swimmer's Race" and "Sunlight and Sea" are, to take three examples at random, poems that would be perfectly at home in, and would certainly grace, any "Georgian" anthology; and the same may be said of "The Waggon":

> "Crimson and black on the sky, a waggon of clover
> Slowly goes rumbling, over the white chalk road;
> And I lie in the golden grass there, wondering why
> So little a thing
> As the jingle and ring of the harness,
> The hot creak of leather,
> The peace of the plodding,
> Should suddenly, stabbingly make it
> Dreadful to die.
>
> "Only, perhaps, in the same blue summer weather,
> Hundreds of years ago, in this field where I lie,
> Cædmon, the Saxon, was caught by the self-same thing:
> The serf lying, dark with the sun, on his beautiful wain load,
> The jingle and clink of the harness,
> The hot creak of leather,
> The peace of the plodding;
> And wondered, O terribly wondered
> That men must die."

And if Mr. Noyes can compete successfully with the "Georgians," even on their own ground, we cannot but feel that, however much he may have sinned in writing for the sake of writing, he has, when moved by a genuine impulse, a dignity, a range of vision, and a passion for humanity that raise his best work far above the average level of modern verse. We feel this the more confidently after re-reading, in this selected edition, such a fine poem as his "Creation"; and we are more than ever compelled to doubt either the intelligence or the seriousness of any critic who calls Mr. Noyes but a reincarnation of Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

G. T.

* "Selected Verse: Including 'A Victory Ball' and Other Poems Old and New." By Alfred Noyes. 5s. net. (Blackwood.)

MISS MAY SINCLAIR'S NEW NOVEL.*

At a symposium of writers, the other night, the question was raised as to whether or no the novel was played out as a form of art; and Miss Sheila Kaye-Smith gave it as her opinion that the hundred to a hundred and fifty thousand word book was doomed, but that the long-short *conte* of from twenty to forty thousand words was coming into its own.

During the last few years we have had one or two examples of this. Rebecca West gave us her tender

* "The Life and Death of Harriett Frean." By May Sinclair. 6s. (Collins.)

"Return of the Soldier," F. Tennyson-Jesse her passionate "White Riband," and now May Sinclair has produced "The Life and Death of Harriett Frean," a book worthy—and that is saying a great deal—to rank with the other two.

Miss Sinclair once remarked that pity was her strongest emotion; and whether that is or is not a fact, she has certainly drawn this prim and commonplace old maid with pity and understanding. Harriett Frean was the child of superior people, the sort who took Tennyson and Ruskin seriously, and themselves wrote a little on the "Social Order." She was brought up to avoid what her parents termed moral ugliness, and to put sentimental ideals before reality. When Robin Lethbridge falls in love with her she sends him back to the woman he does not love, and preens herself on having done a uniquely beautiful act. The high-water mark of the book is reached when Mona Floyd, Robin's niece, tells her she has been "a selfish fool"; that she has made three, no, four people miserable by her silly acceptance of her parents' point of view.

Harriett, however, could do no less. She is not able to think for herself, and her arrogance, her satisfaction with that trivial self is founded on this, the only moment of self-assertion in the course of her life. She clings to the belief that her act, though it no longer appears "as it once did, uplifting, consoling, incorruptible," was one which if it had to be done again to-morrow, she would do.

And Harriett was right. She was too stupid to depart in any way from conventional theory and deed. She was without strong emotions, or even strong instincts; she was in fact of a curiously low vitality. An affectionate daughter, she had a sentimental feeling for Robin, and she clung drearily to three or four dreary women friends—she was in fact a dull, arrogant, "icily regular" woman who lived for sixty-eight years, and yet was never more than half alive.

About this woman Miss Sinclair has written a book of singular beauty. Every word is chosen and fits like a stitch set in a piece of embroidery. Almost every word is of a fine silk and in harmony with those set before and after. Harriett herself is not interesting, and not even Miss Sinclair's art can make her so. It is the writer's presentation of this dull creature that holds the attention and holds it triumphantly. Nevertheless the book will probably not appeal to sentimentalists (and though these we have always with us, it is a hopeful sign that they are less often in the high places), for it is too poignant an indictment of their point of view.

A beautiful little book, and some of the episodes most happily conceived. What could be more true to life than Harriett's call on the Brailsfords, the people next door. She has waited seven years before calling, and "she was nobody in that roomful of keen, intellectual people; nobody—nothing but an unnecessary little old lady who had come there uninvited." That is the terrible truth. Harriett is one of the unnecessary people who, bringing nothing to the feast of life, may take nothing away. But she did not make herself, and "Only an infinite pity . . . "

C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

MY BALKAN LOG.*

Doctor Johnston Abraham has succeeded in doing a difficult thing—he has written a war book in which the war is kept in the background, and in which there is not a dull page. Already well known as the author of "The Surgeon's Log," Dr. Abraham needs no introduction. His account of the experiences of himself and his colleagues of the No. 1 British Red Cross Serbian Unit in the Balkans is one of the most interesting narratives I have ever had the good fortune to read. Imagine six doctors and twelve orderlies, with a Russian lady doctor and some unskilled assistants, attempting "to run a show nearly twice as large as the London Hospital"; but, as the author says, in war one does impossible things. It was bad enough while they were dealing only with the flotsam and jetsam of the battle-field, but when the typhus scourge had them fairly in its grip, then indeed their case was a parlous one. I wish I had space in which to quote even a few of the incidents described: how many of the Serbian patients died rather than submit to operation; how Austrian prisoner-patients were calmly allowed to *starve to death* by their attendants if the doctors did not keep their eyes everywhere; how wonderful "The Little Red Woman" and Sister Rowntree were; and how the Turkish Baba treated his patients with pills made of verses from the Koran written on paper. It is a tale of heroism written with a modest unconsciousness of heroics, with a note of tragedy underlying even its most delightfully humorous passages. It is not too technical to be understood by the layman, but there is in it food for thought for those medical men who have the cause of medicine at heart.

F. D. G.

* "My Balkan Log." By J. Johnston Abraham. 15s. net. (Chapman & Hall.)

A YOUNG AMERICAN IN ENGLAND.*

This book is the journal kept by Richard Henry Dana during his visits to England in 1875–6, and also to the Continent. He was a young man then, from Boston, and had graduated at Harvard. His father was the elder Richard Henry Dana, author of "Two Years Before the Mast," who was well known to many distinguished people in England. Thus, furnished with letters of introduction from his father, and a few more from Longfellow and James Russell Lowell, young Dana at once received a warm welcome over here. One of his first invitations was to dine with Sir Robert Phillimore, who took him on the same evening to a little party at the house, in Carlton House Terrace, of Lord and Lady Frederick Cavendish. Next he was invited to Spencer House, and the late Lord Spencer introduced him to Lord and Lady Russell, with whom he spent some pleasant days at Pembroke Lodge, in Richmond Park. Through the Cavendishes and Lytteltons he met Mr. Gladstone, and was invited to 23, Carlton House Terrace. Consequently, within a fortnight he had met, and been received on the most friendly terms by, some of the most notable people of fifty years ago.

London society, of course, was still at that period a very restricted and select circle, more like one large family. Wealth, notoriety and artistic qualifications were not then a passport to the inner citadel. But merit was, if backed by letters of introduction in the case of a visitor from another country. Once received, young Dana was able to hold his own, for he evidently had an attractive personality and much ability. He had a distinguished career at college both as scholar and oarsman, and over here he at once made himself proficient in English sports.

There is something very pleasant in the way this young American was received as one of themselves by these distinguished people. As I have said, society was then like one large family, and its members were much more simple and unsophisticated than their successors of to-day. Thus on one occasion young Dana went with Gladstone, Lady Frederick Cavendish, Lord and Lady Edward Cavendish, and Lady Lyttelton, to the old Prince of Wales's Theatre to see Marie Wilton and Ellen Terry in "Money." "Going to the theatre, Mr. Gladstone rode on the outside of the carriage to direct the driver." After the play, Gladstone walked home for exercise, and the ladies went back in a cab—all the party reassembling at Lady Frederick Cavendish's house for "late evening tea."

Dana's surprised and ingenuous comments on the habits of English society make amusing reading—particularly in country houses like Althorp, where he found his luggage unpacked and his evening clothes ready laid out and "hot water at hand."

* "Hospitable England in the Seventies." By Richard Henry Dana. 21s. net. (John Murray.)

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Speaking recently in London in connection with the bicentenary of Molière, M. Maurice Donnay, member of the Académie Française, said that if we were ever to secure the permanent peace of the world it was necessary that nations should know each other. But, he added, "the language question was a great drawback."

The language question is a great drawback. There is no doubt about that. And an equally great drawback is the somewhat clumsy and uninteresting way in which Foreign Languages are so often taught in this country, and not in this country alone.

The epithets "clumsy" and "uninteresting" cannot be applied, however, to the new Pelman method of learning French and Spanish that is attracting so many students at the present time.

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XUM

It is remarkable to read that in 1875 people dined as late as 8.45 p.m., and dropped their final g's in such words as "talking" and "singing." One thought these two peculiarities came into being in the reign of Edward VII. Apparently domestic servants were as trying forty-six years ago as now. At Lady Frederick Cavendish's house one day, the servant whose duty it was to replenish the fire was out, and as it was impossible to ask the footmen or maids to do so, Mr. Dana put on the coals for his hostess; and at Althorp, Lord Charles Bruce and Dana had to work hard in marking out the tennis court, as it was not the duty of any of the gardeners or men servants to do the work. I think these are extreme cases, but Mr. Dana's book remains an interesting commentary on English life in the seventies.

S. M. ELLIS.

THE PROFITEERS.*

Mr. Oppenheim was on the threshold of a discovery when he first recognised the importance of pace in plot. The speed with which incident follows incident, and the smooth dexterity with which scene works into scene, go far towards explaining our pleasant sensation of having come in with a winner at the close of "The Profiteers." The author does not encourage self-analysis in his characters, and with the movements of their minds, in so far as they are movements, he has small concern. Solely in their actions he is interested; the tale is not held up while they think.

Mr. Oppenheim is too experienced a novelist to let us contemplate his plot apart from his people, if such a distinction were not indeed only a little less foolish than that between the form and matter of a poem. But his constant care for what happens, as distinguished from what might have happened, serves to show where his affections lie. He has no time for nice distinctions. He wants a villain and he gets him in Phipps, an unrelieved scoundrel. He wants a modern society girl, and he finds Sarah Baldwin, who drives a taxicab, and in her spare time is engaged to the Hon. Jimmy Wilshaw. The clearest impression that we have of Sarah is that, when first we meet her, "she is attired in the smartest of garden-party frocks." (Mr. Oppenheim is at no pains to disguise his sex.) But such details do not matter. Throughout we know enough about the people for the purposes of the story. When occasion demands, as in the case of the two chief characters, the lines are drawn much more carefully.

John Wingate, an American millionaire, comes to London to fight the directors of the British and Imperial Granaries, Limited, who by their speculations are out to corner British wheat. The price of bread has soared to two shillings, and public opinion is fierce against the company. Wingate has the support of Lady Dredlington, whose husband is on the Board. The two have met in hospital in France, and are in love. By a series of marvellous happenings, Phipps, Rees and Dredlington fall into Wingate's power. He forces them to sell at a price which brings the loaf down to sevenpence, and leaves them bankrupt.

Are the improbabilities too great? Not to put too fine a point upon the matter, Wingate makes use of kidnapping, false imprisoning and manslaughter to gain his purpose. And he ends by marrying the countess. Yet, such is Mr. Oppenheim's persuasive skill and so ingenious are his explanations that our credulity stands the strain. Only when he makes a Scotland Yard detective connive in the hero's escape, through sympathy with his motives, do we waver. For the rest, we do not bother about improbabilities which do not strike us at the time of reading. In the phrase of Hurd, used in the early days of Spenserian criticism of the "Faerie Queen," it is enough if the reader can be brought "to *imagine* the possibility of them."

M. S.

* "The Profiteers." By E. Phillips Oppenheim. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"LEST WE FORGET."*

The second volume of Mr. Buchan's great History of the War has now appeared. It is a splendid continuation of the temperately conceived, amazingly accurate and fascinatingly vivid narrative begun in its predecessor. Its story, although it concludes with the German attack on Verdun, is the story of 1915, and in the history of the British Empire 1915 will probably be regarded by a critical posterity as the most fateful year since that of Waterloo. For it was in 1915 that we committed ourselves definitely to a strategic policy in the war which not only immeasurably complicated the Allied task until the Armistice, but the effect of which has persisted—always perniciously—to this day, and will probably so persist for years to come. In the Staff manuals of the future 1915 will be pointed to as an example of the evil wrought by that false strategy which fancies that an enemy can be beaten by any method other than that of defeating his main forces in the field. And, since the policy of a democracy is ultimately shaped by the more or less instructed opinion of the great mass of its citizens, it is a lesson which cannot too earnestly be impressed upon the generation growing up to take over the privileges and the duties of the British Commonwealth. The millennium is not yet come.

Nineteen-fifteen saw the beginning and end of the attempt on the Dardanelles, it saw the beginning of the extravagantly expensive conquest of Mesopotamia, and it saw the inception of that vast internment camp for Allied forces—the Salonika expedition. It also saw the direct result of this scatter-brained dispersal of force—the inability of the French and British to relieve the pressure on the Russians, and the utter failure of the ambitious Allied attack in the West in September, 1915. Even to this day the seeds sown in 1915 bear their maleficent crop. We still suffer from the loss of prestige in Oriental eyes for which the Dardanelles was responsible, our Salonika expedition has left the Balkans in a state of exasperated instability, and our conquest of Mesopotamia has resulted in an entanglement and an expense of which the British people would gladly be rid. Nineteen-fifteen is a turning-point in our history.

Mr. Buchan handles it with that combination of magnificent synthesis and subtle analysis which is characteristic of his historical work. His study of the Dardanelles campaign is the most valuable that has been written, although, curiously, in his résumé of its antecedent history he omits any reference to the projected and abandoned attempt upon the Straits by the Balkan Powers when the Bulgarians were stalemated at Chataldja at the end of 1912. This still-born project was the origin of the Greek refusal to co-operate with us in 1915. Mr. Buchan seems to think that there was the faintest possible chance of success—there certainly was not more—but neither he (ready as he is to give credit for the good intentions of the High Command) nor anyone else can frame a satisfactory excuse for attacking the peninsula at its tip.

His description of the landing, like all his descriptive passages, is splendidly done:

"Slowly and very quietly the boats and destroyers steal towards the land. A little before five an enemy's searchlight flares out. The boats are now in shallow water under the Gaba Tepe cliffs, and the men are leaping ashore. Then comes a blaze of rifle fire from the Turkish trenches on the beach, and the first-comers charge them with the bayonet. The whole cliff seems to leap into light, for everywhere trenches and caverns have been dug in the slopes. . . . The first Australians do not linger. They carry the lines on the beach with cold steel, and find themselves looking up at a steep cliff a hundred feet high. In open order they dive into the scrub, and scramble up the loose yellow rocks. . . . He who knows the Ægean in April will remember the revelation of those fringed sea walls and bare brown slopes. From a distance they look as arid as the Syrian desert, but when the traveller draws near he finds a paradise of curious and beautiful flowers—anemone, grape hyacinth, rock rose, asphodel and amaryllis. Up this rock-garden the

* "A History of the Great War." Vol. II. By John Buchan. In four volumes, each 25s. net. (Nelson.)—"With the Russian Army, 1914–1917." By Major-General Sir Alfred Knox, K.C.B., C.M.G. Two vols. 36s. net. (Hutchinson.)—"The Riddle of the Rhine." By Victor Lefebure. 10s. 6d. net. (Collins.)

Australians race, among the purple cistus and the matted creepers and the thickets of myrtle. They have left their packs at the foot, and scale the bluffs like chamois. It is an achievement to rank with Wolfe's escalade of the Heights of Abraham. . . ."

And here is the epilogue to the tragedy, the last words on that military miracle of the Evacuation :

" Across the ribbon of the Dardanelles, on the green plain of Troy, the most famous of the wars of the ancient world had been fought. The European shores had now become a no less classic ground of arms. If the banks of Scamander had seen men strive desperately with fate, so had the slopes of Achi Baba and the loud beaches of Helles. Had the fashion endured of linking the strife of mankind with gods, what strange myth would not have sprung from the rescue of British troops in the teeth of winter gales and uncertain seas ! It would have been rumoured, as at Troy, that Poseidon had done battle for his children."

That other great military event of 1915—the drive against Russia which flung her out of Poland and so nearly threatened to annihilate her armies, is treated with a clarity, a breadth of vision, a grasp of detail which makes one consistent epic of the story. Never before has it been so comprehensibly told for the English reader, and as never before can the reader appreciate the cool-headed fortitude of the Russian generals extricating their armies from impossible position after impossible position. Mr. Buchan, exercising upon the Germans a critical faculty which perhaps he somewhat restrains in dealing with our own operations, makes it clear why and how they failed, as later on he makes it clear why they failed at Verdun. The German machine in 1915 was ponderously slow. Germany's " method of war," he says, " seemed to have been designed for elderly group commanders, highly trained, aided by a superb equipment, but without the fires of genius or youth." All the belligerents suffered from elderly commanders, but one of the lessons of 1915 is to see that future commanders, whatever their age, are at least " highly trained."

To the British public, the account of that Battle of Loos, where for the first time the cost of war was brought home to the nation at large, will probably be the most interesting part of the book. Again, Mr. Buchan's study of it is the clearest, most vivid and most comprehensible that has yet appeared. He does not attempt to hide the fact that the failure of the gallant First Army to achieve anything at all of importance was entirely due to the withholding of reserves by G.H.Q. and to the untrained nature of those reserves when, too late for anything except useless sacrifice, they were at last thrown into the battle. But his conclusion " that the superb drive and devotion of the troops of attack were frittered away by a certain fumbling and confusion in the mind of Headquarters " is excessively tactful. Loos will be, for the military historian of the future, a standing example of how *not* to fight an offensive battle. It is impossible to avoid the reflection, when reading Mr. Buchan's account, that his vividly told and substantially accurate story would have been of greater and more patriotic value if he had driven home the lesson which obviously was patent to him.

But Mr. Buchan evidently refrains of set purpose from outspoken attack, and he is entitled to gratitude for what he gives us—the finest history of the war that has yet appeared.

Major-General Knox's two volumes, " With the Russian Army, 1914–1917," present the first authoritative account by a British eye-witness of the war from the Russian side. As British Military Attaché he was in an exceptional position to observe all that went on, both at the front and at the back of the front, and he made full use of his opportunities. In our subsequent disgust with Russia we have too readily forgotten the unselfish heroism of those Russian armies which, almost weaponless, attacked again and again with no other purpose than to relieve their Allies in the West. Major-General Knox's book is not only an historical document of the highest value, it is a most interesting day-to-day story of his experiences with those armies which never lost their offensive spirit until the inept bureaucracy behind them had exasperated the Russian Empire into suicide. Particularly brilliant is his vivid description of

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the Revolution, which he witnessed at Petrograd, and the ensuing demoralisation not only of the army but of the state. The tragic irony which waits on the naïve illusions of visionaries who see the world as they want it to be and not as it is, was never more cruelly manifest than in this scrupulously temperate record of events. It is a lesson in the instability of our civilisation.

Another valuable *aide-mémoire* is "The Riddle of the Rhine," a somewhat ambiguous title under which Major Lefebure introduces a most important study of chemical warfare, as practised in the Great War and as foreshadowed in the future. "Chemical warfare," he says, "is the *point faible* in world disarmament," and he proceeds to make it unpleasantly obvious that poison-gas has practically superseded high-explosive, and that the provision of poison-gas is bound up with the chemical industry of which Germany is regaining the monopoly. The nation which invents a new variety of gas, against which existing masks are inefficient, holds in its hand a potential military victory over all comers—whether or not it possesses the normal equipment of an army. It is to be hoped that the danger from the German chemical factories is not so real as the author makes a case for—but the world was surprised in April, 1915, by the first use of poison-gas in defiance of a solemn convention. Let us not forget that diabolical success and run the risk of a second surprise which would be infinitely more disastrous. Monopoly of a superior weapon is a dangerous temptation to unregenerate man. If Major Lefebure's advice is taken, that monopoly will not be left to Germany.

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN.

GOOD COMPANY.*

The haphazard wanderings of a little company of good chums through highways and by-ways of England; the inns they found, the people they met, the songs they sang, the sights they saw: of such fancies and fragilities is this book composed. But let no intending reader be prevented from carrying out his good purpose by the idea that it is one of those pretty volumes of mild travel and weak philosophising which are the fruit of immature thought and poor observation, wherein romance is forced upon us and the author seems to call notice to the deliberate unsophistication of his writing; of them we have nothing to say in praise. "Penny Royal" is robust, rollicking, wise, foolish with the right kind of fooling, fanciful, practical, anecdotal, and, after we have said our say of adjectives, above all beautiful.

Even so, a difficult book to describe without making lengthy quotations, since it has neither story nor plot, but is just a go-as-you-please record of happiness, with no set form; wherein the author may suddenly bring his reader into close touch with mystery and matters of infinite moment, or may with equal abruptness buttonhole him and poke barefaced fun at him; or, again, may take his arm in irresistible friendliness and drag him off to a huge talk about any subject in the visible and invisible universe that chances to crop up. Very few authors can do this aimless, discursive musing and chatter well, and we are quite willing to admit that inconsequence does not appeal to every reader; but the select crowd (they will be a crowd, we feel sure, and will certainly be select) who read this book with the real pleasure and sympathy and good-fellowship that has been the portion of the present critic will want to shake hands with Mr. Morton and thank him for his skill, for his gift of laughter and light-heartedness, for his genuinely delightful philosophy. To be one of the little company of travellers—who were essayists and poets on holiday, as far as may be gathered—would be a memorable experience; and, so far from the record being pure imagination, as some might think, we have treasured the recollections of wanderings not so very dissimilar, and can well believe that everything happened as it is set down.

"Life is a miracle and a constant joy," says the author in almost his concluding sentence; and that is the undertone running through all the seriousness, all the hilarity. But it must be the life of the open air and the hills and vales, not the life of offices and workshops, though we perceive that, beyond the author's contempt for the town, he recognises that somebody must do the "grind." And, according to the sad comments which came when one member of the party announced his marriage, it must be the bachelor's life. Of that point, much might be written without arriving at any decision; so we will leave it, echoing the sentiments of the final chapter: "God willing, publishers permitting, your indulgence continuing, we shall meet again." We hope so, sincerely; our indulgence is sure for so welcome a visitor.

W. L. R.

* "Penny Royal." By J. R. Morton. 6s. 6d. net. (Philip Allan.)

SCANDINAVIAN FICTION.*

Scandinavian authors seem to have a peculiar tendency to write serial stories. Not the serial in our sense of daily or weekly instalments, but serials on a large scale—yearly novels, often running into heaven knows how many volumes, each picking up the threads of the previous one and continuing the web. From the point of view of the literary critic this is of course an excellent method; it saves so much work when one is able to follow an author's production in, so to say, one large tapestry. But only a genius can permit himself to employ such a method, only a genius can show us perennially the same little group of characters, often in the same milieu, without wearying us to death and, at the same time, forming a hard shell round his own faculties which must ultimately prevent him from creating anything but marionettes. Thus—though in fairness to the author we must state that "The Miracles of Clara van Haag" is only the second volume of Mr. Johannes Buchholtz' Egholm novels—we find ourselves once more as spectators of the life drama of Mr. Egholm, genius, lay preacher, inventor of the first turbine, photographer, and, first and last—mad. Fru Clara van Haag, wife of a high customs official, returns to Denmark after many years of foreign travel to settle down in the small town Knarresby. She finds that her servant Hedvig is the daughter of her former boy-lover Egholm, now a local photographer in poor circumstances. As Fru Clara married van Haag Heaven-knows-why, and still cherishes in her heart the memory of Egholm, she showers all the generosity of her ardent soul over the Egholm family, in devious ways putting its various members on their feet. The story as a whole is not quite convincing as a slice of modern life, but it is full of charming and whimsical little pictures, often finely humorous and bracing as the salt sea air that blows through Knarresby's little streets.

Knut Hamsun's "Wanderers" originally appeared in Norwegian as two separate novels under the titles "Under the Autumn Star" and "A Wanderer Plays with Muted Strings." And as the latter is a sequel to the former, this probably explains why in the English edition the two novels are published in one volume. There is such a peculiar and definite chasm between the two parts of this book that the reader's curiosity is aroused as to what happened to the author personally during the period that elapsed between the writing of them. In the first part, which the translator has given the title "Autumn," we meet Hamsun as we know him from his books "Pan" and "Victoria," the man who knows himself as part of nature, and nature as a constituent of himself, who *feels* with the spiders, the forest and flowers, who has experienced the universe as an entity. And yet it is a different Hamsun.

* "The Miracles of Clara van Haag." By Johannes Buchholtz. 8s. 6d. (Gyldendal.)—"Wanderers." By Knut Hamsun. 8s. 6d. (Gyldendal.)

The raw and unrestrained subjectivity which, in "Pan" and "Victoria," so often sticks forth its cloven hoof in the midst of the tenderest passages of love for man and nature, is toned down in "Wanderers," appears as a sensitive background of understanding and sympathy with human frailty and confusion. The key-note in the character of the wandering labourer Knut Pedersen (the author's own name is Knut Pedersen Hamsun) is love and gentleness. And above all else he loves *woman*. He does not merely fall in love with women as is the way of common mortals; his heart is aflame with an almost sacred fire wherever and whenever he meets them, be they old or young, mistress or maid, pure or guilty; and his love is in every case everlasting and deliciously whimsical.

In the second part, "With Muted Strings," we come back to the same scenes and the same people after a lapse of some five or six years. Knut Pedersen is still the eternal lover, but a new note has crept in between the lines, a certain half-veiled garrulous interest in the petty meannesses of mankind, a slight foreboding of approaching old age in the author, which we found in full flourish in Mr. Hamsun's last novel, "The Women at the Pump." But even a genius is subject to the tooth of age, and even in advanced age Mr. Hamsun remains a genius.

The translator, Mr. W. W. Worster, M.A., has fulfilled his very difficult task with considerable ability, but an occasional foot-note to explain various untranslated Norwegian words and expressions, the meaning of which we cannot always guess from the context of the sentence in which they occur, would have been helpful to the British reader.

ROWLAND KENNEY.

ROBERT LYND'S ESSAYS.*

Essayists are not, and never have been, so plentiful as poets; partly, perhaps, because no man can write essays that matter until he has lived, and lived long enough to have seen a good deal of life and to have learned at least a little wisdom from personal experiences. The poet may begin early and rely on imagination and fancy, but the essayist can no more do his work without facts than a gipsy can light his fire until he has been about to gather sticks for it. Exquisite poems have been fashioned of dreams and beautiful phrases, but your essay can be no such airy nothing; it must have a philosophy of some sort, must have a point of view and something to say, as well as some charm in the saying of it, or it will be as ineffectual as an empty lamp.

Mr. Lynd has all these qualities of the true essayist, and adds to them a quaint, genial humour and a delicate fantasy that no good essayist should lack, but some do. If he has ever written a lighter, more whimsical, volume than "The Pleasures of Ignorance," I have not come across it. A very miscellaneous collection, it ranges from such a delightfully realistic and imaginative sketch as "The Herring Fleet" to a frivolous dissertation of "New Year Prophecies"; from shrewdly observant nature studies, such as that on "May," or "The Hum of Insects," to an ironical discourse on "Virtue," or amusing revelations of the trials of "The Betting Man" and "The Intellectual Side of Horse-Racing." Mr. Lynd has the gift of writing on anything and getting interest and entertainment out of it. You anticipate frivolity in "The Morals of Beans," and find him in one of his graver, more significant moods, and everywhere he has the art of taking you by surprise with some happy turn of a sentence, some illuminating thought, some new aspect of an old truth, some provocative theory that delights you either by its vision and insight or by its sheer ingenious perversity.

There is so much one would like to quote that the very plenty is embarrassing; and no two or three extracts would

* "The Pleasures of Ignorance." By Robert Lynd. 7s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)

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TWO THINGS FOR YOUNG WRITERS.

One of "Personality's" correspondents writes gratefully of:—"—criticism which I had sought vainly for two years. I thought I could write, but . . ." (Candour?). And another, who had already sold several stories, writes:—"I am delighted! You have pulled—to pieces and shown me how to put it together again."—(Constructive Criticism?). Other struggling aspirants should consult "Personality," White's Hotel, Wexford, Ireland. (may send short MS.)

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give any adequate idea of the book's riotous diversity, so I shall content myself with urging all and sundry to read the whole thing, for it is worth reading. For all their wide differences in theme and treatment, the essays are bound each to each by their writer's individuality. It is a little book of wit and wisdom that never goes far from everyday affairs; is by turns flippant and profoundly serious; sympathetic and satirical; pictorial and didactic — the book of a man who has felt the sense of tears in mortal things, and loves his fellows even while he laughs at them. I am so taken with it that I would like to have written it myself, and next to that would like to read another from the same hand.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Robert Lynd.**

F. H. L.

THE GREAT GLORIANA.*

One of the best proofs that the historic sense of the nation, if it ever had any, has given place to something else—commerce or travel or amusement, whatever it is—lies in the comparative indifference of Englishmen to-day about the memory of Queen Elizabeth. Part of the reason consists in the clumsy methods of some of the eulogists of the Tudors. In other words, Froude overdid it, and a man who glorified Henry VIII at any cost could hardly do the family a greater disservice than bestow the same treatment on Henry's greatest daughter. Kingsley's way was the less disreputable of the two, for he did at least write a popular epic of the Elizabethan era which has in it the elements of great romance, and romance is always the more acceptable when it refuses to pass as history. Mr. Chamberlin has no need of pretence or prevarication, and he adds to the freshness of the New World view on Old World history something of the thoroughness and earnestness that made an immortal of his countryman, Motley. Motley would never have made whole chapters of medical reports, as Mr. Chamberlin does, but then our author, as a man of legal and journalistic experience, knows what is demanded in the kind of controversy he is waging, or rather in the kind of judgment by which he hopes to dispose of uncertainty for ever. He has been eight years engaged upon the task, and he shames our men of research by the wealth of new and authentic material he has amassed. By investigation among the archives of Hatfield and Spain, Denmark and Sweden, he has obtained material enough to revolutionise our thoughts concerning Queen Bess, and one may fairly doubt if so monumental a contribution has been made to English history by any American scholar since Dr. Wallace published in *The Times* years ago the result of his inquiries into the Southwark period of the life of Shakespeare. Clearly our home investigators will have to look to their laurels.

By way of clearing the ground, Mr. Chamberlin shows that of the fifty-three authorities to whom we usually look for light on Elizabeth and her times, only eleven have ever presented any of the nineteen sources available for the defence of her character, and of these eleven only one has cited as many as five. This one, Miss Strickland, is naturally a champion of her sex; and the next best is the Catholic historian, Lingard, who is coming more and more into his own as a man of diligence and learning, singularly alive to sources we too often think a modern monopoly, and capable of a dispassionate condemnation of men like Becket, whom he might be supposed to belaud by the mere force of Catholic hero-worship and tradition. Of the moderns, the one that Mr. Chamberlin quotes with most approval is Mr. Algernon Cecil—his "Life of Robert Cecil"—and the late Major Martin Hume; then, after him, Richard Congreve the positivist, and Professor Beesly. It would be derogation to any of these men to class them with a pseudo-historian like Froude, whom our public regard as *par excellence* the Tudor apologist and expert. And Mr. Chamberlin is well within his rights in quoting as a characteristic gem of Froudian psycho-analysis a sentence like this: "It was a cruel fortune which imposed on Henry VIII in addition to his other burdens, the labour, to him so arduous, of finding heirs to strengthen the succession."

What is Mr. Chamberlin's task? Simply to show that the accusations of loose conduct which have been so rife against Elizabeth had no foundation in the first-hand evidence of the time, and that, even if there were support for what he conceives to be the inventions of her enemies, her moral character is protected by her physical incapacity. It is a devil's advocate sort of plea, perhaps, and lays bare an ugly converse proposition against all men and women of the past who were known to be healthy and full-blooded. But, such as it is, Mr. Chamberlin backs his defence with an array of intimate and expert testimony that is little short of amazing. He shows by a lifetime-chart drawn up by Sir Arthur Leigh, the eminent pathologist, that after the age of fourteen Elizabeth had hardly a year without serious ill-health, certainly until the years from fifty-five to sixty-two; and then that, in the last eight years, she relapsed into a succession of illnesses which carried her off at seventy. Her ailments were of great and bewildering variety, but mainly indicative of bodily debility and functional disorders, possibly arising from her father's licentious habits. But the evidence is clear that in refusing so many suitors she was fulfilling the law of her own being, and that if she flirted with any of her courtiers, coquetry went no further. One familiar circumstantial statement is that the evidence against the Queen and Dudley is contained in dispatches at Simancas, but Mr. Chamberlin says that at Simancas there is nothing of the kind. He is one of the very few writers on the period who recognise that the physical defects which handicapped Elizabeth had their counterpart in the afflictions of her sister Mary. But he does not note, so far as one can find, how Elizabeth's surprising recovery of health dated from the death of Mary Stuart. This is not a sentimental age, but the old-folk tradition of this country is to pity the Queen of Scots, as Johnson did, and admire the talents of Elizabeth for want of any claim to our affections. She is as destitute of charm or atmosphere as her sister or her brother, and of the whole of the Tudors we may fairly say that they had gifts and excuses but no endearments. This does not impair our indebtedness to Mr. Chamberlin for a remarkable and loyal piece of pleading in defence of a figure whom he pities as a woman but greatly admires and celebrates as a patriot and a queen.

J. P. COLLINS.

* "The Private Character of Queen Elizabeth." By Frederick Chamberlin. 18s. (John Lane.)

FRANCIS JOSEPH—BUCKRAM EMPEROR.*

During the seventeen years he spent in the aides-de-camp department at the Hofburg, in which time Francis Joseph shook hands with him once only, Baron von Margutti seems to have made it his business to act as Boswell to the Johnson of the Emperor. He noted down immediately every conversation he had with his imperial and apostolic master; while he pumped diplomats, generals, ecclesiastics, jurists, physicians and tutors for information about the Emperor himself, the Empress

* "The Emperor Francis Joseph and His Times." By Lieut.-General Albert Baron von Margutti, C.V.O. 24s. net. (Hutchinson.)

Elizabeth, the Crown Prince Rudolph, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and the Archduke—subsequently Emperor—Charles. The fruits of this assiduity, as garnered in the Baron's book, "The Emperor Francis Joseph and His Times," must be admitted to be piquant and appetising; the more so because the chronicler, reversing the part of Balaam, sets out to bless his hero and ends by cursing him. He tells us that the Emperor admired the Kaiser for his sense of family affection; yet he has to confess that such admiration came with but an odd grace from a monarch who, after allowing his wife to be estranged from him and his only son to tread the road to ruin, conferred a valued order on the Mexican President who had helped to kill his brother, the ill-fated Maximilian. He is never tired of praising the Emperor as the Apostle of Peace, and he assures us on reliable authority that he absolutely and wholly disapproved of the ultimatum to Serbia; yet he admits, without an attempt at explanation, that Francis Joseph deliberately let loose the dogs of war. He expatiates on the Emperor's humanity and kindness of heart; yet he not only relates anecdotes which controvert this view, but informs us that his master hailed with a sense of relief the assassination of his nephew and his nephew's wife. He insists that no one ever succeeded in imposing his opinion upon the Sovereign in the slightest degree; yet he quotes instance after instance to show that this Sovereign was entirely at the mercy of his diplomatists and his generals. He emphasises the fact that the Emperor—a German first and foremost—disliked the Hungarians and always found it an effort to go to Budapest; yet the only explanation he can give of the fatal hegemony of the Magyars during Francis Joseph's reign is that the King of Hungary was afraid of the Hungarians. The picture indeed which Baron von Margutti paints of the Austrian Emperor is that of a ruler who, content to let sleeping dogs lie, escaped from political realities by steeping himself in the routine work of a bureaucrat and founded his whole system of statecraft on the "Dualistic Compromise" of 1867 and on the alliance with Germany. On the details of Court and official etiquette, on the fashions of uniforms and the minutiæ of State banquets, on the punctual discharge indeed of all the tedious and utterly unimportant duties of ceremonial royalty, Francis Joseph was apparently an acknowledged authority; but of real kingship, that is to say of sound political insight and bold and comprehensive political action, he seems to have been totally devoid. It is one of the ironies of history that a ruler so mediocre, so calloused, so timid and so age-worn should have had it in his power to shut the gates of mercy on mankind. He shut them, it is probably true, at the bidding of his friend and ally, Kaiser Wilhelm; for to the alliance with Germany, the key-stone of his foreign policy, he clung with the desperate tenacity of a monarch who had been crushed by Germany's power. Not even the astute diplomacy of King Edward VII, who according to Baron von Margutti tempted him with the bribe of Serbia, could detach Francis Joseph from his pact with Prussia.

LEWIS BETTANY.

THE MUSE HERSELF.*

A reviewer meets a difficulty in writing of Mr. Shanks's new poems. He is tempted to say, quite simply and truthfully, that "The Island of Youth" is very plainly the best book written by this poet, and fulfils the promise of "The Queen of China," published two years ago; and he is tempted to support this by quoting freely. Yet such a method would be both easy and inadequate; a reviewer with a sense of poetry, and a sense of honour, is bound to say much more, even while saying so much; he is bound, for instance, to say that "The Island of Youth" not only fulfils promises, but enlarges them and makes a

* "The Island of Youth, and Other Poems." By Edward Shanks 5s. (Collins.)—"Seeds of Time." By John Drinkwater. 3s. 6d. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

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fresh promise. Again, the excellent qualities of "The Queen of China" were diffused rather than concentrated; the play of that title showed beauty, but beauty wanting intensity; while the new volume suggests no mere diffusion of qualities in gentle heat. Almost any one of the new poems is a fully representative poem, with the full virtue of the poet distilled into its few or many lines; there is more weight in the best of the new than in the best of the old, and so far as the longest poem of the present volume is concerned, it is infinitely finer than the unequal earlier play.

There is another preliminary, namely, that the new book develops a striking feature of its predecessor in the expression of personality through a luminous glow like that of the rock-pool of the first poem in this volume. The luminous glow is everywhere in the book, and personality is discernible within it, here darker, here brighter, as the rocks that sleep beneath a lapping tide, in so many spots of the western coast. Candour, truthfulness, simplicity, and a passion for the common beauty and the rarer beauty—these are the names of some of the rocks that wrinkle the clear cheek of the water; but the tide itself, if I may still speak in an image, is moved by that strong mistress of tides, Imagination.

The poem just referred to, "The Rock Pool," is an illustration of the whole beauty which Mr. Shanks now touches with so sure and easy a hand—without the desperation of assault and without the fumblings of timidity:

"Yet lovely in captivity she lies,
Filled with soft colours, where the waving weed
Moves gently and discloses to our eyes
Blurred, shining veins of rock and lucent shells
Under the light-shot water; and here repose
Small quiet fish and dimly-glowing bells
Of sleeping sea-anemones that close
Their tender fronds . . ."

There is, you perceive, no immobility in this quietness, but the movement of the returning wave itself; and this water-movement is felt in many another page of the volume:

"And many another night
That melts in darkness on the narrow quays
And changes every colour and every tone
And soothes the water to a softer ease,
When under constellations coldly bright
The homeward sailors sing their way to bed"—

and loveliest of all in an image from the narrative poem which gives its title to the volume:

"There is in maidenhood a subtle strength
Reserved, as if a rift in mountains tall
Should catch the waters of a hasty spring
And hold them peaceful in her lap of stone
One moment, while the sky and leaning flowers
Are mirrored in the floods and make them lovely. . . ."

This narrative relates the seclusion of Achilles at Scyros and his discovery by a stratagem of Ulysses; in a few hundred lines of blank verse the story is not so much told as presented, telling itself by picture, music, image, movement. Many years ago Mr. Bridges wrote a beautiful play on the same theme, and this poem of Mr. Shanks's is worthy of praise by those who admire the work of the Poet Laureate.

It is harder still to write of Mr. John Drinkwater's "Seeds of Time," for his work, in whatever medium, is so capable in form, and so copious, that a heathenish vain repetition seems to be the only resource for a critic. But a few weeks ago there came "Oliver Cromwell," a play which (as I have already remarked in these columns) is admirable even if, perhaps, not quite so admirable as that stage masterpiece, "Abraham Lincoln." Mr. Drinkwater has the energy which he needs for the service of his other gifts, and he is able to follow lyrics with drama, and drama with lyrics again, in the luckiest profusion. The new book has a poem which I like better than anything else he has written:

"Long time in some forgotten churchyard earth of Warwickshire,
My fathers in their generations lie beyond desire,
And nothing breaks the rest, I know, of John Drinkwater now,
Who left in sixteen-seventy his roan team at plough.

"And James, son of John, is there, a mighty ploughman too,
Skilled he was at thatching and the barleycorn brew,
And he had a heart-load of sorrow in his day,
But ten score of years ago he put it away. . . ."

And has he written anything more winning than:

"Myself I do but find
An ashen mind,
While others greeting me
Are flames, I see.
Yet they, alone, lament
Flames that are spent,
Remembering with shame
My crystal flame . . .
Hereafter then I'll be
A flame to me."

The eager and gluttonous race of anthologists will be hot upon these forty-odd new poems of Mr. Drinkwater's.

JOHN FREEMAN.

DOSTOYEVSKY.*

Lives of great men all remind us that there are good biographies and bad biographies. Other things (as most people must have noticed) are capable of a similar division. But biographies can also be divided into good biographies and filial biographies; and the difference between this division and the former is less than you might think. The present volume is a filial biography—a very filial biography. It is written by the novelist's daughter, Lyubov—in French, Aimée—and the title page uses that form in an odd combination of feminine French Christian name and masculine Russian (or Polish) surname. A Life of Dostoyevsky by his daughter promises unusual interest; but there is only a limited fulfilment here. It is an infatuated book. It tells us a number of uninteresting and even imaginary things, and it conceals or meliorises a number of interesting things. Surely the time for a sophisticated Life of Dostoyevsky has long gone by!

The most irritating thing in the book is the author's anti-Russian mania, which constrains her to present the great novelist as a man personally and artistically non-Russian. Of course, we need scarcely say that she proves him to be the most nobly born and nobly descended aristocrat possible. There was, she would have you believe, not only nothing Russian, but nothing plebeian or bourgeois about the author of "Poor Folk." To describe her great father's ancestry she goes back to the mythical Norsemen who traded with Byzantium, and then, coming with great rapidity to mediæval Europe, she writes thus:

"My father's ancestors were natives of the Government of Minsk, where, not far from Pinsk, there is still a place called Dostoyeve, the ancient domain of my father's family."

Really, it is like trying to magnify the greatness of Charles Dickens by asserting that he was descended from Richard III with a later admixture of Stuart blood from Charles II. The author's race-mania pursues the unhappy reader everywhere in the book. He is assured on the very first page that Dostoyevsky must never be considered as a Russian, but as a "Normanised-Lithuanian"—the word "Norman" is used throughout, although to English readers the name suggests nothing but William the Conqueror in England, and Count Roger in Sicily. But when the author says that "Lithuania was Normanised," we must not think of these great operatic adventurers—we must not think of Harold and Hastings and the almost mythical field of Cerami; we must go back a dozen centuries and more to the ancient movements of the Baltic tribes that washed so much new blood into many parts of Europe; her "Normans" are, in fact, the Lithuanian counterparts, not of William and Roger, but of Hengest and Horsa.

* "Fyodor Dostoyevsky." By Aimée Dostoyevsky. 12s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

Everything that Dostoyevsky did, or did not do, from his birth to his death is explained on Lithuanian principles, until, after the hundredth repetition of the "unblessed word" the reader feels inclined to scream. Scarcely a person is named without being praised or blamed according to racial prejudice. The family of Tolstoy is traced back to the sixteen-hundreds and found to be German; therefore nothing that Tolstoy wrote is in the least Russian:—he is a "German Colonist." And Lyermontov is Scottish, and Yukovsky a Turk, and Nekrassov a Pole, and Pushkin a Negro. Well, the divine Dumas was much nearer Africa than Pushkin was; shall we therefore describe him as the "Great Negro Novelist"? Dostoyevsky's disreputable first wife is alleged to have been the daughter of one of Napoleon's mamelukes taken prisoner during the retreat from Moscow; therefore, though in features she was typically Russian, she is habitually called an "African."

There is nothing in the volume to redeem these extravagances. It exhibits no power of criticism or narration, and cannot even be called coherent. It tells us scarcely anything new and nothing that is significant, especially about one important passage in his life where the Letters are silent for nearly a year. It is too "Lithuanian" for that. Dostoyevsky is now justly a world-famous novelist, and it seems almost sacrilege to condemn a biography written by his own daughter; but the sorry truth is that these extravagant and distorted pages contain next to nothing likely to give pleasure or profit either to those who already know his work or to those who desire to know it. What a story Dostoyevsky could have made out of his own life! Indeed, he has already told it, in part, to those who can read between the lines of his stories and letters; and with that part we must be content. A full, critical and authoritative Life of Dostoyevsky has yet to be written.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

LUNATICS AT LARGE.*

Each of us, some genial theorist has averred, has in him a streak of lunacy. It is all a matter of point of view, however, for one man's lunacy may be another man's sanity, and the general title which I have given to this notice of the four books lying before me might to some readers appear as inappropriate as to me it seems fitting. A mere glance at the first book would suffice to establish its fitness there; to the second book the title frankly belongs; as to the third it may be confidently said that—from the point of view of the people of Croome, Miss Belt, on her escapade with Jim, gave full evidence of lunacy; and when we come to the fourth, well, intellectual eroticism seems to me to be one of the lunacies of our time. To pass, however, from the general to the particular, from the linking lunacy to the individual qualities of the books.

"The Cruise of the *Kawa*" is indeed a capital piece of fooling from start to finish—a sustained essay in literary farce or genial parody of those who have sailed the Pacific and published narratives of their travels. The deliciously droll photographic illustrations suggest at the outset that the "Cruise" was undertaken and enjoyed within the area of some film-producing tract of California; the text suggests that the South Seas over which the *Kawa* sailed were the uncharted waters of romance to which Robinson Crusoe's island and other lands belong. "Lunacy," I am sure many a matter-of-fact reader will exclaim before penetrating far into the record of the wanderings of the *Kawa* and the five men; glorious fooling is likely to be the summing up of those matter-of-lie men (to use Lamb's phrase) who can enjoy a hearty excursion into the nonsensical. Says the veracious chronicler, Mr. Traprock:

"I can only say that as I sat sniffing on the deck of the *Kawa* there was about us a *soupçon* of the *je-ne-sais-quoi tropicale*,

* "The Cruise of the *Kawa*." By Walter E. Traprock. (Putnams.)—"The Lunatic at Large Again." By J. Storer Clouston. 7s. 6d. (Nash & Grayson.)—"Volcano." By Ralph Straus. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)—"I Have Only Myself to Blame." By Elizabeth Bibesco. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

Cambridge University Press

A Volume of Oriental Studies presented to Edward G. Browne, M.A., M.B., F.B.A., F.R.C.P., on his 60th Birthday (7th February, 1922). Edited by T. W. ARNOLD and R. A. NICHOLSON. With a portrait of Professor Browne and 10 illustrations. Royal 8vo. £4 4s net. (Edition limited to 500 copies.)

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XUM

half nostalgie, half diablerie. It was . . . but what's the use? You will have to go out there some time, and smell it for yourself."

So I would say of the book it is . . . but what's the use; you must read the delightful nonsense for yourself.

Mr. Storer Clouston has given us a number of highly diverting romances since he first told of the adventures of his "Lunatic at Large," and those of us who are ever ready to be entertained by his happy manner of setting forth ludicrous escapades, are doubly attracted by the present volume. Here once again that genial "lunatic," Mr. Francis Mandell-Essington, gets away from those in whose charge he is, and enters upon a succession of ludicrous adventures, and in the course of them shows a preternatural quickness of ingenuity and decision in getting out of tight corners. Here he plays a part in the romance of Philip Ridley and Beatrix Staynes, who have met abroad, fallen in love—and are mysteriously prevented from reunion by the machinations of the lady's wicked guardian and his ally. Her other guardian is the "lunatic," and it is by stealing an interview with him that Philip is instrumental in his enlargement. Though the story begins with the romance of the young couple and closes in the approved fashion, it is the wonderful doings of Mr. Mandell-Essington that form the main theme in between. And wonderful doings they are—including the escaping from one tight corner in a complete suit of armour, and walking for a considerable distance thus attired. The successive episodes of his escapade follow each other with something of the rapidity and effect of those "chases" which were an early feature of cinema displays, and to the same great end of laugh-raising amusement.

By way of sub-title Mr. Straus describes "Volcano" as "a frolic," but his restraint is such that his engaging story never becomes frolicsome in the manner of its telling. He has depicted the society of a certain English spa to which he gives the name of Croome, but though he has surveyed his ground under the influence of the Meredithian Comic Muse, he seems almost over carefully to have avoided slipping into the farcical. Essentially, of course, Miss Belt's escapade *was* farcical, though Croome regarded it as an affront to all those proprieties the sum total of which is—Croome. That a middle-aged lady of wealth and dignity, a great social influence and organiser of a meddling charity, could go off with the brother of her own dismissed housemaid and have a high old time, would assuredly get her stamped lunatic by all her fellow-workers in the cause of Croomean respectability—but the devising of that improbability has given Mr. Straus the occasion for writing a deeply interesting and heartily entertaining novel. If he does not evoke laughter from his reader, he keeps that reader in a smiling mood throughout.

Though I have bracketed "I Have Only Myself to Blame" with those differing essays in fictive humour, it has the great difference that its author has not been moved by any spirit of levity. She indulges in neat and sometimes happy phrase-making, but in the slight sketches that make up this volume seems so obsessed by the mere facts of sex-association that the literary quality of her work impresses one less pleasantly than it otherwise might. The people of whom the author writes are those who belong apparently to high society, and if her women are to be taken as typical of that society, then indeed is it in an unsatisfactory state. Over-much of the book is concerned with an almost morbid dwelling on unsatisfactory relations between wives and husbands—but fortunately the general impression left is rather one of having read skilful literary essays than of having been confronted with realities.

WALTER JERROLD.

AN ENGLISHMAN IN EGYPT.*

It is a long time since a more entertaining volume has been published than "The Leisure of an Egyptian Official" by the late Lord Edward Cecil. The sketches in this volume were written by Lord Edward Cecil at various times during the eighteen years of his service in Egypt, and though only intended for the amusement of his family, it has happily been conceived that these pictures of the lighter side of Egyptian life would be of interest to a wider public. Lord Edward Cecil had a very keen sense of humour and a very pretty wit, and his account of "My Daily Life" is highly amusing. He takes us through his day in Cairo, his office work, his attendance at councils, his golf, his club, his dinner, his evening party and his supper and, appropriately enough, concludes with his dream. He wrote with such a keen sense of enjoyment that the enjoyment is infectious. His characters, both Egyptian and British, are deliciously described, and his sense of the ridiculous frequently runs riot. Delightful is the thumbnail sketch of the concession-hunter: "A portly gentleman with a large extent of waistcoat, irreproachably but a trifle overdressed, and as full of dignity as a turkey cock. His ancestry probably formed the rear-guard of Moses' army when they left this country, and gave particular attention to the borrowing of jewels." He pokes a little gentle fun at the inveterate gossiping in the club at Cairo, where every word kills a reputation:

> "I remember we all treated an old American gentleman with great respect for the whole of one winter because we had been told, and we believed, that he had burnt his whole family, whom he disliked, in his country house in America. It turned out afterwards that he had only saved his mother-in-law from being drowned in a canal in Holland, and we treated him thenceforth with indulgent contempt."

Underlying the humour in this book, much valuable knowledge of Egypt, unostentatiously displayed, can be gleaned. We learn what laborious days an able and highly-gifted official like Lord Edward Cecil lived; how he had always to be on his guard against concession-hunters and tricksters of all nationalities "on the make"; how he had to humour and restrain the Egyptian official not then trained to office; how he had to resist pressure of all sorts to do "jobs"; how he had to be sociable, to dine out more or less officially with dreary colleagues; how, indeed, he had to make his work his life, and find what amusement he could in so doing. "The Leisure of an Egyptian Official" is much more than an entertaining volume; it is the record of the life of a high-minded, high-souled English gentleman.

LEWIS MELVILLE.

* "The Leisure of an Egyptian Official." By the late Lord Edward Cecil, K.C.M.G., D.S.O. 15s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

THE WITHDRAWING-ROOM.*

In country cottages the room is still sometimes called the parlour, and is never used except as a museum for the memorials of the dead and the more useless of wedding gifts. In towns we call it the drawing-room, shortening the old word which indicated the main use of the room, somewhere to retire from the pleasant business of eating and work. That room, whatever you call it, is the source of modern comedy. The ancient world had no withdrawing-room. Social life among the Greeks and Romans was enjoyed either at the table or in the market-place and the baths; and the comedies of both peoples are public, even as Shakespeare's comedy is public. With Molière, or with the Italian comic writers, is the birth of the modern social comedy, whose home is the drawing-room and whose subject must always largely be the solid conventions, controlled by women and circumscribed by the interests of the leisured class. English drama of the late nineteenth and of this century is peculiarly rich in this social comedy. Pinero, Jones, Wilde, Hankin, Chambers, Maugham, Barrie carried on the tradition of Wycherley, Congreve and Sheridan. As society got more complicated, the varieties of social comedy increased; and of the dramatists I have named, all but Wilde and Hankin write more

* 1 "The Plays of H. H. Davies." Two vols. 25s. (Chatto & Windus.)—2 "Eight One-Act Plays." By George Calderon. 10s. 6d. (Grant Richards.)—3 "Six Plays." By F. H. Darwin. 9s. (Heffer.) — 4 "Sable and Gold." By M. Dalton. 2s. (Maunsel & Roberts.)—5 "Possession." By L. Housman. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

naturally of middle-class life than of the aristocratic world which was the only subject for drawing-room comedy in the time of Congreve. As Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's plays give an invaluable picture of English middle-class life in the late Victorian age, so the plays of Hubert Henry Davies mirror that same life in the time of King Edward.[1] Davies does not carry the weight of Mr. Jones. He is no satirist, and had small interest in intellectual or social movements. Like most dramatists, he too often falls into the bad habit of writing about Mayfair when his characters were really of Brondesbury or Kensington. Occasionally, but rarely, his own class is betrayed by the social solecism of some of his characters; but his plays on the whole are a faithful picture of the society he knew best, the suburban and London middle-class. Of the plays here reprinted there are only two for which any critic of reputation would prophesy a conditional immortality—the condition being, of course, that the future political development of this country presupposes an audience which can understand and be entertained by essentially bourgeois comedy. I cannot imagine any generation to come, if the drawing-room still exist, which will not find amusement in "The Mollusc," and a little more than amusement in "Cousin Kate." "Mrs. Gorringe's Necklace" is ruined by Davies's surprising effort to turn a light comedy of manners into a tragedy of character. The suicide of David Cairn is entirely out of keeping with the excellent humours of the vulgar Mrs. Gorringe and her intolerable hostess. "Doormats," although there is no tragic incident, is spoiled by a similar hesitation between comedy and tragedy; and also suffers from the grave technical fault that the dramatist leaves us in doubt as to Mrs. Giles's innocence. "A Single Man" is good farce—it reads rather like a dramatic version of a novel by E. F. Benson; but Davies has allowed his capacity for caricature to run away with his judgment, and underlines his effects in a way which destroys them. "Outcast" is a pathetic effort to write a more serious play, which fails because Davies's mind was essentially conventional, and never more so than when he was taking what he believed to be an unconventional point of view. All of these plays, however—all in the volumes, indeed, except the lamentable "Lady Epping's Lawsuit" (a nightmare after an overdose of W. S. Gilbert), can be read with pleasure, for many witty lines, much shrewd observation, and not a little controlled and pleasant sentiment. "The Mollusc" and "Cousin Kate" are almost equal to Hankin. They are not so witty; but they are more natural in their development, and the dialogue has a freshness and a freedom from metallic brilliance which Hankin rarely achieved and never maintained through a whole play. For these two plays alone readers will welcome this handsome edition.

I hope Mrs. Calderon will not let this volume[2] stand alone as representative of her husband's dramatic talent. The man who wrote "The Fountain" deserves a better collection than this of eight very trifling dramatic sketches—in some cases barely amounting to more than indifferent words for charades. Only two of the plays, or perhaps three, were worth reprinting—"The Little Stone House," a study in Russian idealism, "Longing," a curious "subjective" drama showing the influence of Andreyef, and perhaps "The Two Talismans"—an Eastern trifle, pleasantly written and effective, I should think, on the stage. It is unfortunate that Mr. Calderon, whose real talent was for comic satire of an objective kind, should have fancied himself as a light comedian. I have rarely read heavier or drearier farce than "Peace," "Derelicts" and "Geminae." It was a pity to reprint them.

Lady Darwin's plays are not of the parlour, but of the country-side.[3] Written for the village players of her Cotswold hills, they are full of knowledge of country folk, their psychology and speech, and have that slow affectionate movement which rejoices all true country-lovers. The plays have traditional subjects, sometimes suggested by old folk-songs, and the book should be a boon to any enthusiasts who are trying to revive the drama in our villages. Mr. Dalton, with the best intentions in the

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world, has written a very bad play.[4] His subject is the effect of the Dublin rising of 1916 on one family in Cork. I can emphatically praise his tact. He moves without indifference yet with real fairness among the troubled motives which led to the rebellion; and at moments he achieves eloquence in his picture of Paul Keller, the rebel who doubts his cause but has a great courage—the man who half believes patriotism to be the bane of his country, and yet who dies for the vision others see. Unfortunately Mr. Dalton has no dramatic gift and little for characterisation; and any effect his play will produce must depend altogether on the poignancy of the subject.

Mr. Housman's little play of purgatory[5] is a delight. Never was the danger of possessions illustrated more wittily, more devastatingly than in this peep-show in paradise. I suppose our censor will never allow it to be acted—but how I long to see Thomas's twiddling feet vanishing from the view of his stricken family! The Stage Society has spent a lot of time on much dreary stuff: can it not be persuaded to give us an evening devoted entirely to Mr. Housman—to "Possession" and the three Victorian plays?

R. ELLIS ROBERTS.

Novel Notes.

THE KINGDOM ROUND THE CORNER. By Coningsby Dawson. 7s. 6d. (The Bodley Head.)

Mr. Dawson's work grows stronger and its content much deeper. Readers of, say, "The Little House," of eighteen months ago could not have foreseen such a complete study as its author to-day presents of Lord Taborley, or, in lesser degree, of Braithwaite, his valet, who rises to the rank of general during the war and, after a struggle, makes good in the harder days of peace. Lady Dawn is less real. We learn so much of her by hearsay in the earlier part of the book that towards the close when we actually meet her, she does not quite live up. Who could live up to being "the most beautiful woman in England"? Her name is unfortunate. Is it only a coincidence that when she comes into Taborley's life the day breaks, and his kingdom is at hand? Our last word is not a grumble. If Mr. Dawson's touch is sometimes heavy, and if he takes his responsibilities to his characters over-seriously, he does, in his own way, get his effects through. He leaves with us a picture of the high hopes and vague longings of the months which followed the Armistice, which interprets very completely the moods and feelings of the time.

A VAGRANT TUNE. By Bryan T. Holland. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

Mr. Holland must be tired of reading that he is the grandson of Mrs. Gaskell, and that, as a village comedy of manners, "A Vagrant Tune" compares unfavourably with "Cranford." Let his book stand on its own merits. It is not without its good things. The chief character, Euphemia, is quite an individual person. One of the company of servant-maids in fiction, she might walk arm-in-arm, a pleasing foil, with Florence Kilpatrick's "Elizabeth." Euphemia lives with Miss Lavender, whom she has served for forty years, in Diddlebury, a couple of miles distant from the main road which leads to the nearest market-town. The outer world breaks in upon them with the weekly visits of Mrs. Brill, a charlady, who "obliges" with the housework. Mrs. Brill is delightful, and has been drawn with the mirror held close to nature. One day she brings the news that Starr Cross (a neighbouring estate) has been sold. The purchaser is Mr. Tidd, an old playmate of Miss Lavender's, who has made a fortune and is retiring. A charming romance follows. Mr. Holland avoids the over-emphasis which would have spoiled his quiet tale, and the story makes pleasant reading.

THE BRIGHT MESSENGER. By Algernon Blackwood. 7s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

Algernon Blackwood is undisturbed by the discussion as to the Fourth Dimension, for he was born into a world of more than four. Others may take the world as their parish, but he has quietly annexed the stars also as his native province. And this without losing touch with common earth, save that to him no earth is common. Surely in these days of somewhat hectic interest in what is called "the new psychology" he is sure of a public, for not only is he acquainted with what is worth reading of the heap that has been written on the subconscious and the vagaries of divided personalities, but he has a native genius for finding his way among these fascinating and mysterious problems, and supreme (some will feel uncanny) skill in presenting such psychological problems *in action* in men and women that most definitely live as you read. "The Bright Messenger" is a masterly story of a case of divided personality in a superman, which is of extraordinary interest in itself as a story, and worth half a dozen of the semi-amateur introductions to the New Psychology because of his judicious and sane handling of the various problems as they arise. It is certainly one of the best of recent novels for one who fain would think to purpose, what time he reads with vivid interest.

LOVE AND THE LOCUSTS. By G. B. Burgin. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

When one reflects that Mr. Burgin has more than sixty novels to his credit, one begins to realise something of his understanding of human nature. For Mr. Burgin's books are read. In "Love and the Locusts" he takes us back to the old Four Corners—but a different Four Corners from the one we knew. Stay, the place is the same, but the people are different. It is part of Mr. Burgin's cunning that he makes us accept everything his characters do, because they do it, never minding whether they *ought* to do it, or *would* do it; we simply want to go on reading about them, and about the chipmunks and the brown cows and the squirrels and the red-hot stoves that warm the cabins so cosily in the long winter evenings. They are all in the picture, and we cannot part with a single chipmunk! To reveal the plot would spoil Mr. Burgin's story for the reader—enough that it presents a very pretty problem in psychology—and in love!

THE EMPTY SACK. By Basil King. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

One of the best novels of the season, dignified and persuasive in style, subtle in character-drawing, strong in incident. Mr. King sketches the story of the Folletts, whose father is dismissed for age from the great Collingham Bank. Very pitiful is the state of the Follett family when there is no work for the head. Teddy, the young son, is also in the Bank, and to help the desperate situation at home, pilfers money. Jennie, the pretty daughter, marries young Bob Collingham in secret, but does not love him, and Bob goes abroad, saying nothing. Teddy is caught, but not before he has shot dead the pursuing detective. Then comes the end of Teddy in the electric chair, but throughout there is a spiritual quality about the book, Teddy goes out bravely; and very bravely and quietly the young couple, now reconciled, face the future. The study of Junia Collingham, ambitious, scheming, skilful American mother, is remarkable. Her effrontery is boundless, her quickness in grasping the main chance almost uncanny, her wordly wisdom overpowering, and her resignation to things as they are, and have got to be, is a courtly resignation.

THE ONLY GIRL IN THE WORLD. By Lloyd Williams. 7s. 6d. (Page.)

Patricia Dean, who sells blouses at Paxton's (although her father had been a real "swell"), catches sight of her lover on page one of Mr. Williams's fresh and ingenuous

tale. Guy Hewet was at work on a telegraph pole, high in air, and she saw him through the window of the Reserve Stock Room. "Don't cut away just yet," he pleaded. "It's awfully lonely up here." He liked her, you see, immediately. As she rushed downstairs with the box of blouses, her mental note was "Twenty-eight, perhaps nine. Dark eyes, and rather a jolly sort of chin." Very soon after this Pat is unjustly charged with theft, and falls in with the notorious Mrs. Mack—moneylender—and goes to live with her. There is much humour and discernment in the sketch of this remarkable person. But this is notably a book for those who can still be called young; for the pictures it gives of young bubbling love, strong against adversity, are always light and charming. An attractive and wholesome story, which augurs well for the author's future.

THE MAN IN THE TWILIGHT. By Ridgwell Cullum. 7s. 6d. (Cecil Palmer.)

A strong and surprising yarn of love, competition, and greed. Mr. Ridgwell Cullum has doubtless won his big success by his straightforward and vigorous methods. He is practical to the core. Observe the hero and the heroine making love. There are no subtleties: no torturing shades of feeling. He is plain man, and she all woman. "She reached up and placed her soft arms about the neck that rose trunk-like above his shoulders. In a moment she was caught and crushed in his arms. 'Why—that's just fine!' The exclamation broke from the man out of sheer delight and happiness." Mr. Cullum mixes his ingredients lavishly; there is abundance of incident in his description of the struggle for supremacy between the two great leading wood-pulp mills in the lonely Canadian forests. Nancy, the heroine, works for one firm, and the man who loves her is fighting for the other. The study of Leslie Standing, the clever idealist cursed with "a yellow streak," is excellently done. We are in a primitive world as we read; among rough, healthy folk who pour out exuberant slangy talk, never far from the point. An excellent romance written with intense ease and gusto.

THE VALLEY OF PARADISE. By Alfred Gordon Bennett. 7s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

Mr. Alfred Gordon Bennett has given us an excellent adventure story of the South Seas—that home of romance; —a story after the style of "The Blue Lagoon," though of course quite different in detail. Raymond Mortimer discovers on one of the islands a beautiful white girl who knows nothing of her parentage, has been brought up from infancy by an old native, and cannot speak a word of English. He becomes infatuated with her, and as he is unable to rejoin his ship, an idyllic love affair ensues. Raymond's companion, a Norwegian, is likewise affected by the girl's charm and innocence, and after some months of extreme misery and brooding jealousy, he leaves the little party and tramps away across the island. Raymond and Hula also go off on their own and discover the wonderful Valley of Paradise, where they decide to remain. Such perfect bliss as theirs could hardly be expected to last, and the finding of Raymond's ship, wrecked on the rocks, is the first step towards its undoing. For there are drugs on the ship and Raymond is tempted to take them—and the habit grows on him. However, forces are at work in England to rescue the two castaways. From the dream-atmosphere of the South Seas we are transported to the squalor of Limehouse, and from this back to the island again, where friends and long-lost relatives meet and the story ends on an appropriately happy note. It is not surprising to learn that the film rights of the novel have already been disposed of. We shall look forward to the author's next book. This, his first novel, shows uncommon ability, a strong sense of the dramatic, a great appreciation of beauty, and a narrative and descriptive style of no little charm.

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—*Glasgow Herald*

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The Bookman's Table.

THE COMPLETE BOOK OF THE DOG. By Robert Leighton. 10s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

Dog lovers, dog breeders, everybody interested in dogs for pleasure or profit, will find Mr. Leighton's book a valuable acquisition. Under separate headings all recognised breeds are adequately dealt with and portraits of well-known champions given by way of illustration. The first section of the volume is devoted to the choice of a dog, with sound advice as to its care and training; the last section to canine ailments and their remedies; and the intervening two-hundred-and-sixty pages give, as has been mentioned, a full and detailed account of each of the various breeds. A glossary of technical terms, an Appendix containing the Kennel Club rules, and an Index, complete what is unquestionably one of the most exhaustive and practical works on this subject. Yet Mr. Leighton's extensive knowledge of pedigree dogs does not prevent his saying a good word for the mongrel; he holds the opinion, which all who can appreciate the companionship of a dog will share—that "any sort of a nondescript cross-bred cur is better than no dog at all."

MEMORIES AND BASE DETAILS. By Lady Angela Forbes. 24s. net. (Hutchinson.)

These memories are not, to be frank, as racy as we anticipated. The writer has of course rubbed up against some most entertaining persons, but has less to say about them than might have been imagined. There are vignettes here and there of her friends—"Margot, impressive and generally hatless, but full of life"; the Princess Pless, "so young and pretty that I was sure she could not have much in common with her German husband, and some years afterwards she told me how much she had suffered in her early married life." The account of Lady Angela's proposal is laid bare. "When J. asked me that evening to marry him, I said, 'Yes, if I may have your chestnut horse!'" Part II is the best half of the book, dealing with Lady Angela's labours in Boulogne. We have heard too much of the sad state of affairs at this port, from people who were there in the very early days, to doubt that Lady Angela's work was of extreme value, when the unattended wounded thronged the quay and a cup of hot coffee was a priceless thing.

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE HUMAN RACE. By Albert Churchward, M.P., M.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., F.G.S. 45s. (Allen & Unwin.)

Dr. Churchward has published a goodly number of books dealing with the origin and evolution of mankind, with primeval and primitive signs and symbols, with the secrets and symbols of Freemasonry, etc. He has clearly a wide acquaintance with ancient and modern theories, an extensive knowledge of facts with regard to discoveries relating to historic and prehistoric man. The publishers claim that the author "shows" that man originated in Africa, and contends that the progress and evolution of the human race can still be studied from the lowest type of original man as he advanced up the scale. "These types are still extant in some parts of the world, driven away into mountains and inaccessible forests by the Nilotic Negro, and these again into lands where they have been isolated by the Stellar Cult people into groups, with little or no intercommunication with others, and they have altered very little since the original exodus from Africa." Well, this is very interesting. But the author does not "show" anything of the sort. He simply *asserts*. And having asserted once he refers to his assertions thenceforward as proven facts, and therefrom builds up his theories, which are certainly most ingenious and well architected, but which fail to convince. For one thing they are amazingly complete and definite, and problems that other inquirers face and find impossible of solution he unlooses as familiar as his garter. In spite of the vast erudition poured out on every page, in spite of the intriguing fascination of the theories put forward so confidently, in spite of much that is interesting, much that is appealing, much that the reader would be glad to accept, the lack of clear statement of fundamentals that can be established beyond dispute must be held to make this book of no value to the ordinary reader. Nor can it be of any value until Dr. Churchward actually does set out his fundamental principles and supports them with facts and arguments that cannot be controverted.

STUDIES IN ISLAMIC MYSTICISM. By Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, Litt.D., LL.D. 24s. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

We owe several previous works of importance on kindred subjects to the Cambridge Lecturer in Persian. His "Studies in Islamic Poetry" has been called a great contribution to Persian literature in English, and Dr. Nicholson's present volume on the Sufis and their Mysticism offers material for the extension of our knowledge which may be said almost to mark an epoch. It creates for the first time an opportunity in this country to become acquainted with certain poets and prophets of Sufism who are "famous in the East," and in Dr. Nicholson's opinion are "worthy of being known in Europe." To those who are acquainted with Mysticism only in its western forms, under the ægis of Christianity, such a gift is priceless. The personalities in question are Abú Sa'íd, Ibnu 'l'Arabi, Ibnu 'l-Fárid, and Al Jílí. The first flourished between A.D. 967 and 1049, the second is of 1165–1240, while the third, his contemporary, was born in 1182 and died in 1235. The last is much later, his approximate period being 1365–6 and 1406–17. Abú Sa'íd is an apostle of casting out self by the realisation "that nothing exists but God." Ibnu 'l'Arabi was an exponent of the perfect man in whom is the Divine Spirit, as the result of which man displays Divine Attributes. Ibnu 'l-Fárid beheld the vision of Divine Beauty in all beautiful things: he is above all an apostle of mystical love. Jílí unfolds the phases of inward illumination in four successive stages, characterised as the illumination (1) of the Actions, (2) of the Names, (3) of the Attributes, and (4) of the Essence of Divine Being, otherwise the self-revelation of God to those who possess an inborn capacity for His realisation in themselves. We get into much fuller and closer touch with Ibnu 'l-Fárid than with the other mystics, for Dr. Nicholson gives copious translations of his Odes and an almost complete rendering of that which is called "The Mystic's Progress," his own spiritual autobiography, or story of his mystical experience in the paths which lead to Divine Union and in the quality or nature of "that abiding oneness," so far as the attained state can be described in words. As a memorial at least, we are put in possession of a very precious treasure, the diary of the life of a lover engulfed *ex hypothesi* in God and passing in his ecstasy into incredible states beyond the state of union. Of these last there are records in the Christian West. Where, however, do they lead the Persian ecstatic? To affirmations such as these: (1) that no one dead or alive has reached the height which he has; (2) that his contemporaries drink only the dregs of what has been left by him; (3) that their vaunted merits are his own superfluity. It may be that these things are open to interpretation, by a *tour de force* or otherwise; but we prefer the way of the great saints who have known and attained in Christ, the way of Ruysbroeck and Eckehart.

RACHEL AND THE SEVEN WONDERS. By Netta Syrett. 7s. 6d. (Thornton Butterworth.)

"I'm tired of England," was the shocking sentiment heard in a schoolroom the other day, as the familiar history-

book was brought out. Fortunately the person who spoke had a birthday, and there had arrived for her the most fascinating book in a pale grey binding, with an awfully strange picture on the cover. Of course Gladys Mary longed to have it read to her—she was still at the stage when reading was difficult. So, very wisely, the governess put away the stereotyped history-book, and began the tale of the happy little girl Rachel, who had such magic adventures in the land of the past. For the morning lesson, instead of the dates of the kings, Gladys Mary heard the first story in her delightful new book; that of the Great Pyramid. And wasn't it exciting too, and what it told was quite true, so one was really learning, as well as having a good time listening. Next history morning Gladys will be allowed to do story number two, "The Hanging Gardens of Babylon." She loves "Rachel and the Seven Wonders," and so will all children who have the luck to get hold of it.

THE GARDEN OF EXPERIENCE. By Mrs. Cran. 10s. 6d. net. (Herbert Jenkins.)

"I have seen life from many angles; touched it at many points; and nothing it has offered has given me more lasting joy than the song of the wind in pine trees and the thin light of stars upon roses after rain. . . ." Those who read "The Garden of Ignorance," back "in the careless days of peace before 1914," will recognise in the above quotation something of the love of beautiful, intangible things that endeared to a wide public Mrs. Cran's intimate story of her own endeavours to create a garden. This is the story of the garden in being; her dreams blossoming in bud and leaf; her hopes made manifest in tiled path and shady lawn. The trees and flowers in her garden are more than trees and flowers—they are personalities. "The old plum tree was a character," she tells us; "a knotted, misshapen, grumbling besom. . . . It had had a cruel childhood we knew from its twisted back and scowling face, but its heart was sweet and generous towards us. . . ." The human folk of the garden no less claim our interest and sympathy. Mrs. Cran recounts anecdotes that bring them before us in vivid detail—little tales of pathos and humour, intermingled with a kindly tolerance, a wholesome philosophy. Such is the story of the gardener-woman—changed "in the modelling hands of Time from a round little baby"; and, writes the author, "though I loved my friend the gardener mate before all others, there are times when I miss my baby much. When I hear a tall and capable Miss recommending sulphates for the strawberry bed, memory does a 'switch-back' and shows me again the little one who complained to me that her flowers wouldn't grow 'because they knew she was little.'" All garden-lovers, whether possessed of that boon a garden, or not, should have this book. It is a book of true values—to be read, kept handy on the bookshelf or by the bedside, and read again many times over. The numerous photographic illustrations lend it additional charm.

A SHORT FISCAL AND FINANCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By J. F. Rees, M.A. 6s. net. (Methuen.)

In public and private discussion on the present state of world finance and world industry and commerce to-day we frequently meet the statement that it was just the same after the Napoleonic wars. In broad outline it was. But the difference in conditions, the difference in development of various countries should make us hesitate before concluding that the problem will yield to the same methods of treatment as did that of a century ago. Then continental states were mainly agricultural, and they did not suffer to the same extent by war. Recovery was much more simple than in our highly complex industrialised, interdependent communities. The main problems of statesmen now are not internal economic problems, they are international problems. As Professor Rees points out,

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THE CHILDREN'S GARLAND OF VERSE. Gathered by Grace Rhys. 7s. 6d. net. (Dent.)

Those who are acquainted with the delicate poems and essays of Mrs. Rhys will know how sensitive is her understanding of children. No better editor for a book of verse intended for the young people could have been found. "The Children's Garland of Verse" is one of the most catholic and delightful collections of the sort that have ever been published. At first sight some readers might be inclined to think that Mrs. Rhys has cast her net too wide, for her volume contains many poems not deliberately addressed to children. Yet those who carefully cast their minds back to their own early years will, we think, appreciate, on a fuller perusal of the book, how faultless the editor's taste actually is. For intelligent children, after all, do not really care much for the "pretty-pretty" verse that is too often offered them, and Mrs. Rhys shows a finer discrimination in setting before them, in addition to an excellent selection of old rhymes and ballads, poems (to mention but a few at random) of the calibre of Wordsworth's "Solitary Reaper," Sir E. Dyer's "Contentment," George Herbert's "Sweet Life," E. B. Browning's "Cry of the Children," and Hood's "Song of the Shirt." Children do not merely like to have their ears and their fancies tickled; they are capable of human sympathy, if rightly appealed to, and Mrs. Rhys knows exactly what the right appeal is. Mr. Charles Robinson's eight coloured illustrations add to the charm of an altogether delightful and beautiful gift-book for young folks. And "grown-ups" will rejoice in it too; for, as Mrs. Rhys says, "those everlasting flowers that we gather in the meadows and pastures of poetry, when we first begin, remain with us all our lives after."

FAVOURITE FRENCH FAIRY TALES. Retold from the French by Barbara Douglas. Illustrated by R. Cramer. 7s. 6d. (Harrap.)

In the daintiest pale grey cover. Good print, clever, vivid illustrations in colour. Altogether most attractive. The stories are taken from the French of Perrault, Madame Leprince de Beaumont and Madame d'Aulnoy. We open with "Cinderella" and proceed to "Little Red Riding Hood." The only tale in the book that is quite new to us is the delightful "Riquet with the Tuft," in which we hear of a small and very ugly Prince, with the sweetest disposition and manners in the world; and of a lovely Princess, who is stupid and unintelligent—"She was so awkward in her movements that she could not arrange four china ornaments on a shelf without letting one fall." "I should prefer," says the Princess sadly to Riquet, whom she meets in a wood near the palace, "being as ugly as yourself, and being clever, to being so beautiful, yet looked upon as a fool." "Nothing is such a sure sign of good sense, madam," replies the noble Riquet, "as to recognise one's own defects." It all comes right, of course.

Music.

THE SONGS OF JOHN IRELAND.

BY RODNEY BENNETT.

TWO notable things about John Ireland are that he is difficult to define and that he has been, and still is, the subject of frequent and often acrimonious discussion. The most interesting thing about the numerous estimates, complimentary and uncomplimentary, that I have heard or read is their extreme diversity. I have not yet come across an expert who pretended to a final opinion of his achievement and possibilities. These are promising signs. If a man can be docketed it is fairly certain that his creative period is either ended or not begun Another promising fact is that, individual though his music is, Ireland has never become a theme for the novelty hunters. He is too serious for that, too little prone to patent

mannerisms as distinguished from a highly personal and consistent style. His work as a whole is essentially difficult, probably too difficult for wide popularity. Yet he has the matter in him for popularity of the best kind. "Sea-fever" has far outstripped the vogue of any first-class song that has appeared for years past. Yet to the larger public his other songs are comparatively unknown.

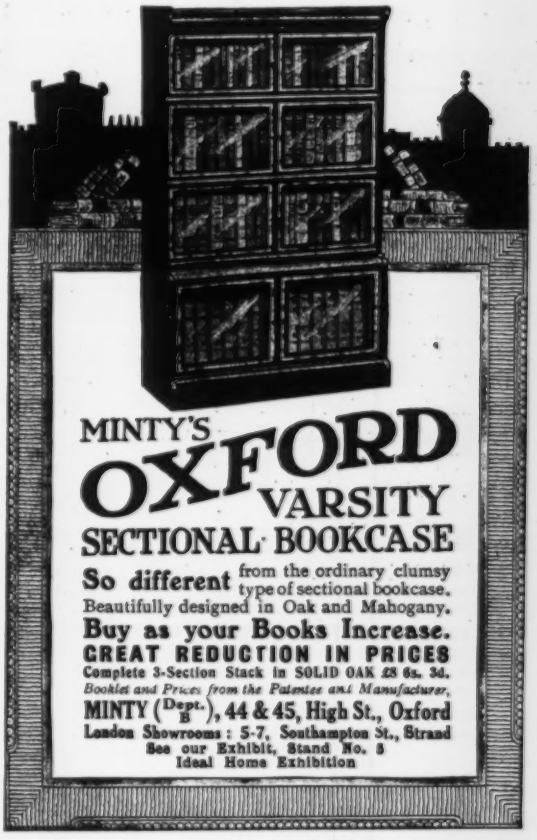
If I wished, as, lacking space, I do not, to define Ireland, I should work out the thesis that he is a man who has not yet succeeded in getting on familiar terms with an unusually complicated temperament, in which emotion is involved with intellectualism to a degree unusual in a creative artist; a temperament sensitive to beauty, sensitive to the ugliness which is beauty's obverse. His music shows a mind restless, keenly analytical, unable to take life and art easily. Occasionally there have been reactions into tranquillity, but his latest works show that these are not final. Resolution is not yet. But certain factors remain constant. In all his work, whether it may please or displease, there is the same standard, the same concentration of purpose, the same real and often painful sincerity. It is music born of emotional conflict. The fluctuations of the struggle leave critical opinion guessing. They puzzle the public. Most of all, probably, they puzzle Ireland.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. John Ireland.

This puzzlement has done more than anything to delay the recognition by singers of the value of his songs. Between his best work and his less successful experiments there is a superficial and highly deceptive similarity that tends to make them neglect what they cannot afford to neglect while good modern songs are so rare. It must also be recognised that of his best songs a number, on account of their complexity, are practicable only for the exceptional few. These too have stood in the way of the considerable remainder which are within the capacity of the unexceptional many. Upon these I intend to concentrate here, passing briefly over the more esoteric successes and dealing with what seem to me the failures only so much as will be useful for purposes of comparison. To do otherwise in the limits of a brief article without lapsing into a barren list would in any case be impossible.

Ireland's published songs number about forty-six, dating from 1911. Of the earliest it is surprising that at least two have not won a wide popularity. Of these neither "Hope, the Hornblower" nor "I will walk on the earth" is strikingly original. They might have been written by some one else, a thing that can be said of few of their successors. But, that being admitted, they remain very much worth while as singers' songs. Virile, dexterous in its accompaniment, "Hope, the Hornblower" is finely effective for a robust baritone.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The other comes from the 1912 volume of five "Songs of a Wayfarer," of which three are particularly notable. "When daffodils begin to peer," a merry sheaf of snatches from Autolycus, is again for baritone. "Memory," a setting for baritone, contralto or mezzo-soprano, of William Blake, seems to me one of the most exquisite and assured things in modern song. The last, "I was not sorrowful," I mention not because I enjoy it, but because it interestingly foreruns the 1916 volume, "Marigold: Impressions for Voice and Piano," settings of two lyrics by Rossetti and one by Ernest Dowson after Verlaine. Whether or not you will enjoy them is predetermined by your taste or distaste for the enervating atmosphere of the poems. This of course does not affect the value of the music, which depends upon its success in reproducing an atmosphere. In this "I was not sorrowful" strikingly succeeds. It is languid, faintly sour and splenetic. It is much better than any of the "Impressions." These strive for an effect which they do not achieve. Their restless irritability shows in elaborate accompaniments, very wide compasses and angular melodic lines which make them excessively difficult to memorise. And when all his work is done the singer feels that he has been trying to handle something which the composer has failed to put into his hand. The impression left is that Ireland has temporarily abandoned line for colour, and that the result is a nebulous formlessness.

Of "Sea-Fever" it is necessary to say little. It combines the directness of the earlier songs with a new individuality. It has achieved popular success without pandering to it. It has been sung in a revue, where it triumphantly not only succeeded but survived. The success is deserved. The music sincerely and finely expresses words which have a universal appeal. The later "Bells of San Marie" fails to recapture the same success because the appeal of the poem is limited and æsthetic.

The war was bound to produce marked effects upon sensitive musicians. The first result in Ireland's case is seen in the restlessness of "Marigold," the second in a sudden turning away from complexity to simplicity. Between 1917 and 1919 appear a number of songs which are as essentially simple, and at their best as absolutely right, as fine folk songs. Of those not definitely inspired by the war the best are settings of Brooke's "Spring Sorrow" and of A. E. Housman's "The Heart's Desire." It would be difficult to find anything more simple than the first or more satisfying. "The Heart's Desire" appeals to me as one of the loveliest things Ireland has done, and shows his power of melody and his characteristic modal style at their best. Both songs are suitable for almost any voice. "Hawthorn Time," another setting of a poem from "The Shropshire Lad," is similar in method. The reasons for its comparative failure offers a pleasing problem to the student interested in comparing melodies. The group concludes with "I have twelve oxen," a jolly song from Chambers's collection of Early English poetry, which is a good and lusty thing to sing. Contemporary with these are three songs—"Remember," "If there were dreams to sell" and "The Sacred Flame"—all good to sing, but unusually sentimental for Ireland. Each deals justly with a poem that is not quite good enough. The same gentleness finds much more charming expression in "Mother and Child," eight extracts from Christina Rossetti's "Sing Song," wrongly described as nursery rimes. They are, rather, quiet songs about childhood for a grown-up mezzo-soprano; and sung by the right one very delightful they would be, for, without being strongly individual, they are sincere and tender things. In his war songs Ireland has achieved the difficult task of writing a group whose value survives the passing of the events that inspired them. All are fine. If distinction must be made I should choose "Blind" and "The Cost" for their splendid simplicity. Their very excellence is their defect. They are so poignant as to make them almost impossible to sing in public. "Blow out, you bugles," and "The Soldier" are settings of sonnets by Rupert Brooke. The second is particularly successful with its fine Elgarian tune in expressing the quiet manliness of words that thrilled England:

> "Laughter, learnt of friends and gentleness,
> In hearts at peace,—under an English heaven."

Within a few months of these came Ireland's most ambitious song, "Earth's Call: A Silvan Rhapsody," a setting for mezzo-soprano of a poem by Harold Monro. This, "The Rat," "Rest," "Adoration" (three settings of poems by Arthur Symons, with French adaptations of G. Jean-Aubry) and "The Trellis," again present Ireland's more elaborate method, and so recall "Marigold." But they are difficult with a difference. In the earlier group the effect remains of an unjustified complexity, in the later of atmospheres subtly realised. "The Rat" is particularly interesting as an excursion into morbid ugliness which justifies itself by its success. All are certainly songs for the exceptional minority. Like the majority of Ireland's later songs, they are most successful in tenor keys. Their vocal technique is striking. They give the singer difficult things to do and yet are essentially vocal.

Little space remains for the songs of last year. "The Land of Lost Content" is a cycle of six songs for tenor voice, from "The Shropshire Lad," which it will be interesting to hear effectively performed. Probably the first, "The Lent Lily," a tranquil and beautiful song, will become the best known. The rest are of an unrelieved sombreness in striking contrast to the songs which form Ireland's most recent experiment—three settings of Elizabethan lyrics: Sidney's "My true love hath my heart," Daniels's "Love is a sickness full of woes" and Dekker's "The Merry Month of May." Here are no unwise imitations of the "old style" rather painfully in vogue at the moment. The treatment is daringly modern. Opinion will vary as to the success with which these very new bottles accommodate the very old wine. To my mind it does so but poorly in the first instance because the composer has mistaken the wine. Sidney is deliciously sincere, but he is not too anxious to be fascinated by a conceit. The music on the contrary is in very serious earnest and the effect is more than a little heavy-handed. It expresses one way of reading the poem, but hardly the general one. The other two songs leave no such doubts. Debatable though they are, they are intensely alive and arrestingly individual. Which, incidentally, sums up very well the interest of all John Ireland's songs.

In the following chronological list of songs by John Ireland the figure indicates the number of keys published and the notes the compass of the lowest. Unless otherwise stated they are published by Winthrop Rogers.

1911: "Hope, the Hornblower" (Boosey), 3; D—E. 1912: "Songs of a Wayfarer: Five Songs" (Boosey), B♭—E. 1915: "Sea-Fever" (Augener), 4; B—D. 1916: "Marigold: Three Songs," A—F. 1917: "The Heart's Desire," 3; D♯—F♯. "The Soldier," 2; C—E♭. "Blind" and "The Cost," D—D; C—F. "Mother and Child: Eight Nursery Rimes," D—F. 1918: "Blow out, you bugles," C—F. "Earth's Call," D—F. "Remember," 3; B—E♭. "If there were dreams to sell," 3; B♭—E♭. "Spring Sorrow," 2; C—D. "The Sacred Flame," 3; B—F♯. 1919: "The Rat" (Chester), B—E. "Rest" (Chester), E♭—F. "The Adoration" (Chester), C♯—E♭. "I have twelve oxen," 2; C—F. "Hawthorn time," 2; C—E♭. "The Bells of San Marie" (Augener), 3; C—D. 1920: "The Trellis" (Augener), 2; A—E. "The Journey" (Enoch), 3; C—E. "The East Riding" (Enoch), 3; B♭—D. 1921: "The Land of Lost Content: Six Songs" (Augener) 2; C♯—F. "The Merry Month of May," 3; B—E. "Love is a sickness," 3; C—E. "My true love hath my heart" (Augener), 2; D—F.

GROUP-SONGS AND SINGLE SONGS.*

The motives which govern the publication of half a dozen songs or so inside one cover, are rather hard to fathom. Because, while sometimes the contents represent the composer in his lighter, slighter, more trivial moments, sometimes they are of much importance and individuality, and should have been regarded as separate issues. Again, one comes across many vocal compositions which do not quite justify publication as single efforts, but would have been all right if included amongst others: even as small inconspicuous blossoms, which would scarcely be gathered and given for their own sake, may greatly enhance the beauty of a bouquet where choicer blooms predominate. And, once more, why certain songs are proffered separately in a series, which inherently call for assemblage in one volume, is a mystery defiant of solution. But there seems no definite rule or reason in these things.

An excellent example of appropriate grouping is offered in Paul Edmonds's "Four Indian Songs." If the author originally wrote in English or in Hindustani, I cannot say—but as English lyrics these words are exceptionally able, and the composer, while endowing them with music of quasi-Oriental colouring, has achieved a melodious and felicitous result, not too exacting for the average

* "The Bird of Time." (Four Indian Songs.) By Paul Edmonds. Poems by Sarojini Naidu. 3s. 6d. (Enoch.)—"Spindrift." Five Songs by May H. Brahe. Lyrics by Ethel Tindal-Atkinson and Madge Dickson. 3s. 6d. (Enoch.)—"Album of Six Songs." By George Whitaker. 5s. (Elkin.)—"Songs of Love and Life." Music by Eric Fogg. Words by Rabindranath Tagore. (1) "One Morning in the Flower-Garden"; (2) "It was in May"; (3) "In the Dusky Path of a Dream"; (4) "Peace"; (5) "Free me from the Bonds of your Sweetness." 2s. each. (Elkin.)—"Evening." Song by O. Merikanto. English version by Elisabeth M. Lockwood. 1s. (Augener.)—"The West Wind." Song by D. M. Stewart. Words by John Masefield. 2s. (Augener.)—"A Cradle Hymn." Music by Herbert Hughes. From a Poem by Isaac Watts. 2s. (Enoch.)—"Caprice for Voice and Pianoforte." By H. V. Jervis-Read. Words by Francis Thompson. 2s. (Elkin.)—"The Four Cross Roads." Song by H. Lyall Phillips. Words by H. Kenniston Wynne. 2s. (Chappell.)—"A Ballad of Gretna Green." Song by May H. Brahe. Lyric by Margaret Dickson. 2s. (Enoch.)—"Night." Song by Mischa-Leon. Words by G. Hubi-Newcombe. 2s. (Augener.)—"Happy Little Dream." Song by Mischa-Leon. Words by Hilda Hart. 2s. (Augener.)—"Soliloquy." Music by George Oldroyd. Words by Christina Rossetti. 2s. (Elkin.)

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amateur, yet effective for concert purposes. Some purists might kick at his penchant for consecutive fifths in the bass, but in this case I confess to enjoying them. All four songs are well worth singing, but one may specially commend "Guerdon" and "The Old Woman."

Miss May H. Brahe is always tuneful, and in her collection entitled "Spindrift," she presents five very short lyrics set with skill and grace. The triplet-figure in the accompaniment to "Sea-Birds" is daintily handled: altogether these small vignettes will give pleasure to Miss Brahe's numerous admirers. And I should like to call attention to the charming verses by Ethel Tindal-Atkinson.

A curious blend of poetic styles and subjects has been selected by Mr. George Whitaker for his "Album of Six Songs." Shelley's "My faint spirit was sitting," Shakespeare's "O Mistress mine," Yeats's "Innisfree," Whitehead's "The *Je ne sais quoi*," are companioned by a four-line verse of Lafcadio Hearn's, and a pensive lyric by Ernest Dowson. It is the queerest, most irrelevant mixture. The composer has desired to be original if nothing else: he is ultra-modern in restless tonality. He seems to me too intricate in his treatment of "Innisfree," which in its nature is simplicity raised to the *n*th degree: but "Seki" evinces singular artistic feeling. "The Moon Maiden's Song" is of an ethereal delicacy, and the Shelley piece stands out sultry, sombre, impressive.

"Songs of Love and Life" are selected from the poems of Rabindranath Tagore; and if not all are equally well adapted for musical setting, yet Eric Fogg has made a successful attempt to provide each phrase with its equivalent in sound. An indefinable fascination exhales from his pages: yet they will not exercise their magic on every one. Some might say, "These compositions are over-elaborated, almost laboured"—yet with what faithfulness and flexibility they interpret the spirit of the words! Others might cavil at the fragmentary character of what can barely be termed the melody: yet each phrase is complete and expressive in itself. Briefly, it amounts to this—, if you like Rabindranath Tagore, you will like Mr. Eric Fogg's rendering of him: if you don't, you won't. But in either case you will allow that Mr. Fogg is endowed with remarkable insight and cleverness.

The songs of Oskar Merikanto are gracious, charming little *morceaux*. I am doubtful that his "Evening" is equal to "The Ring-doves," on which I commented lately: but I am certain that such tender little flowers of music should be assembled in a collection, not produced as individual songs. They are scarcely of sufficient stamina to stand alone: and they are far too pleasing to be swamped among bigger publications. "The West Wind," on the contrary, is a spirited, robust, and lengthy—perhaps too lengthy—effort, in which John Masefield's vigorous verse is wedded to stimulating strains by D. M. Stewart: forming a strong foil to the quiet devotional feeling of the next on our list, "A Cradle Hymn," which has been attractively treated by Herbert Hughes, and should be welcomed by any mezzo-soprano in search of a new sacred song.

To call a thing "Caprice for Voice and Pianoforte" disarms criticism at the outset. That the title is fully earned, may be judged by the words which the composer has chosen from Francis Thompson. They are purely descriptive—descriptive of a girl's hair falling down! The personal equation is all but absent: there is no emotional or dramatic appeal. Why anybody should wish to set, or to sing, a verse about a girl's hair falling down, passes comprehension. With so many glorious poems of Thompson's "set between Heaven and Charing Cross," surely this is a very arbitrary choice. The time-signatures are odd, to put it mildly. The first bar is marked two-four time—the second, three-four—the third, four-four—the fourth, five-four—the sixth, six-four—the eighth, four-four. And so on: including a bar of seven-four on the last page! But of course the composer is a law unto himself in these matters.

Of a frankly popular type, "The Four Cross-Roads" and "A Ballad of Gretna Green" are suitable for either sex, and make no fierce demands upon an amateur's ability. "Night" is somewhat commonplace, but "Happy Little Dream" reveals a pleasant *naïveté*. "Soliloquy" is very well written for the voice, though one does not perceive the *raison-d'être* of its arpeggio accompaniment. Even if the wistfulness of the words is not quite realised, "Soliloquy" will commend itself to a singer, which is a trait very much to the good. MAY BYRON.

The Drama.

CHARLES DICKENS AND "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA."

BY FRANK RUTTER.

INNUMERABLE commentators on Dickens have made reference to the preceding writers by whom he was supposed to have been influenced. "He had access to the older novelists—Fielding, Smollett and others," says one of them; while according to another, "Fielding, Smollett, Le Sage and Cervantes were his friends when his health forbade him to take part in the sports of childhood."

But curiously enough it appears to have escaped attention hitherto how deeply Dickens was attracted and fascinated by the work of another author—John Gay. There is good evidence, as we shall see later, that "The Beggar's Opera" directly incited Dickens to turn his attention to those scenes and characters of low life in which he achieved his greatest triumphs. The example of Gay is apparent and acknowledged in the first serious book with which Dickens had a perfectly free hand—and we must not forget that though he made "The Pickwick Papers" inimitably his own, the subject was dictated by the publisher who commissioned the work. "Oliver Twist" is a Beggars' Tragedy, a deliberate presentation of the reverse of Gay's fantastic medallion. In another comparatively early work, "Barnaby Rudge," the same intention is discernible, "Maypole Hugh" being the tragic reality of that romantic rascal, "Mat of the Mint."

But apart from these two books, in which the analogy is most marked, the novels of Charles Dickens abound with internal evidence of the author's intimacy with and affection for Gay's masterpiece. Snatches of the songs were constantly running through the novelist's head, a special favourite being Macheath's "If the heart of a man is depressed with cares." All readers of "The Old Curiosity Shop" will remember Dick Swiveller's adaptation of this:

> "When the heart of a man is depressed with fears,
> The mist is dispelled when Miss Wackles appears."

Nor will it be forgotten that at young Copperfield's first dinner party, "Markham was the singer, and he sang, 'When the heart of a man is depressed with care.'"

Another adaptation of the ditty will be found in

"Our Mutual Friend" where Mr. Wegg, visiting Mr. Venus, informs his host,

"When the heart of a man is depressed with cares
The mist is dispelled if Venus appears.
Like the notes of a fiddle, you sweetly, sir, sweetly,
Raises our spirits and charms our ears."

Again, when Steerforth incites Miss Mowcher to reproach David Copperfield with inconstancy, that quaint little person exclaims:

"'Is he fickle? oh, for shame! Did he sip every flower, and change every hour, until Polly his passion requited?'"

There is no need, however, to multiply quotations to prove the keen interest of Dickens in "The Beggar's Opera," while his own direct reference to it exists. In the author's preface to the 1867 edition of "Oliver Twist" (which first began to appear in 1837) the choice of the subject is defended by the plea that here the criminal and degraded are presented without any specious allurement or tinsel fascination. By contrast Dickens continues:

"Even in 'The Beggar's Opera,' the thieves are represented as leading a life which is rather to be envied than otherwise; while Macheath, with all the captivations of command, and the devotion of the most beautiful girl and only pure character in the piece, is as much to be admired and emulated by weak beholders, as any fine gentleman in a red coat who has purchased, as Voltaire says, the right to command a couple of thousand men, or so, and to affront death at their head. Johnson's question, whether any man will turn thief because Macheath is reprieved, seems to me beside the matter. I ask myself, whether any man will be deterred from turning thief because of Macheath's being sentenced to death, and because of the existence of Peachum and Lockit; and remembering the captain's roaring life, great appearance, vast success, and strong advantages, I feel assured that nobody having a bent that way will take any warning from him, or will see anything in the play but a flowery and pleasant road, conducting an honourable ambition—in course of time—to Tyburn Tree.

"In fact, Gay's witty satire on society had a general object, which made him quite regardless of example in this respect, and gave him other and wider aims."

From this highly moral discourse would it not appear that the perilous fascination of "The Beggar's Opera," a fascination experienced by the author himself, was the *fons et origo* which impelled Dickens to write a story of crime which should have no charm or allurement for young and old? In "Oliver Twist," he maintains, there are

"no canterings on moonlit heaths, no merry-makings in the snuggest of all possible caverns, none of the attractions of dress, no embroidery, no lace, no jack-boots, no crimson coats and ruffles, none of the dash and freedom with which 'the road' has been time out of mind invested. The cold, wet, shelterless midnight streets of London; the foul and frowzy dens, where vice is closely packed and lacks the room to turn; the haunts of hunger and disease; the shabby rags that scarcely hold together; where are the attractions of these things?"

From all which we may deduce that whatever doubts Dickens, as a good Victorian, may have entertained as to the morality of Gay's opera, he was keenly alive and sensitive to the spell of its art. His criticism is a confession of its hold on his imagination, for under given circumstances we may allow that the most sincere form of flattery is not imitation but reaction.

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THE IRISH PLAYERS. At the Ambassador's Theatre.

What a strange business it is, this art of acting! Here is Miss Muriel Allen recreating Nora Murray, one of Miss Magee's great parts in times gone by. Miss Magee played Nora proudly, heroically, and the forlorn courage of love blazed in her like a flame: "Mixed Marriage" was a great tragedy in those days. Miss Allen, whether from a different reading of the play or because she discerns (as any artist is constantly required to discern) the way best suited to her own art, makes Nora the very antithesis of Miss Magee's conception—mean, flabby, strong only in the blind selfishness which ignores everything but her own desires: and behold, "Mixed Marriage" is a great tragedy still! Artistically, there is not a pin to choose between the two interpretations. The play's balance is altered, not destroyed; and whereas formerly our sympathy went out towards two starcrossed lovers, it is now heaped in double measure on Hugh Rainey, played at a white heat of passionate idealism by Mr. Parker Lynch. One can pay Mr. Ervine no higher compliment than to admit that it is no longer possible to guess his original intention; the play acts magnificently either way; he has built better than he knew. To praise Miss Allgood is superfluous; and her sheer maintenance of the lyric note of "Riders to the Sea" (which the others played a shade too realistically) is no less a triumph of her personality than of her judgment.

FANNY'S FIRST PLAY. At The Everyman.

One of these days, when Mr. Shaw becomes a classic, people will start writing books on Shavian Mothers as they do now on Shakespearean Heroines; and when that delightful procession is at last mustered, Mrs. Rob Gilbey and Mrs. Joseph Knox will be in the front row. In the new Shaw season at the Everyman they are played respectively by Miss Maud Jolliffe with just the right touch of lovable absurdity, and by Miss Margaret Carter with an inspired suggestion of spiritual beauty which, on the first night, was strangely wasted on an influenza-ridden house. The rest of the cast were curiously unequal; Mr. Hignett's Gilbey was even better than Mr. Wills's Knox, which is saying much; Miss Massingham was far too mature (one might almost say matronly) for Margaret who, although she has grown up with a jerk, is yet not wholly emancipated from the schoolroom. Mr. Banks's Duvallet was unobtrusively delightful: his four gradations of the nod in the first act were alone worth the journey to Hampstead. On the other hand, Miss Jones exaggerated Darling Dora beyond the bounds of burlesque, let alone of comedy, and her first exit was an outrage. Even so the play was full of rich comedy, despite the fact that its humour "dates" more than that of any Shavian play. The education of parents has been carried so far forward by the present generation that the Knox-and-Gilbey type of household is already a little incredible, nor is the difficulty smoothed over by the setting which Mr. Macdermott has seen fit to provide. His two interiors give exquisite pleasure to the eye, just where they should torture it excruciatingly. There are two ways (or so I take it: it is purely a matter of opinion) of mounting a play—the neutral and the suggestive. The neutral method, by providing a background as far as possible formless, leaves the play to create its own atmosphere; the suggestive helps to create atmosphere by scenic device. The Knox-Gilbey atmosphere is stuffy—closed windows, horsehair, oleographs and antimacassars: and the play, neutrally mounted, is well able to create this effect. But to provide chaste candelabra, soothing chintzes, and a style of architecture midway between a Greek temple and a Liberty drawing-room, is to fight against the spirit of the play, and make its dialogue not only obsolete but ridiculous.

But the real weakness of the revival lies in its induction and epilogue. They were taken much too slowly. Of the four "critics," Mr. Denham was tolerable; the rest were so astonishingly incompetent that I suspected Mr. Macdermott, in a moment of realism, of having cast them from life; nowhere else but among practising dramatic critics could he have discovered three gentlemen so sublimely indifferent to the art of acting.

E. G. S.

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